

## **Levonorgestrel emergency contraception: important information for women taking other medicines**

Some medicines, or herbal remedies that contain the ingredient St John's wort, might reduce how well levonorgestrel emergency contraception works.

### **What you need to do**

Tell the doctor, pharmacist, or nurse if you are currently taking a medicine to treat any of the following, or you have used one in the past 4 weeks:

- epilepsy (eg, medicines called barbiturates, primidone, phenytoin, or carbamazepine)
- tuberculosis (eg, rifampicin, rifabutin)
- HIV (eg, ritonavir, efavirenz)
- a fungal infection (eg, griseofulvin)
- or if you have taken any herbal remedies that contain the ingredient St John's wort (scientific name *Hypericum perforatum*)

If you are taking any medicines or herbal remedies and are not sure if they might affect levonorgestrel emergency contraception check with your doctor, pharmacist, or nurse.

### **What happens now?**

Your doctor, pharmacist or nurse will talk to you about whether this applies to medicines you have recently taken. If it does, you should either:

- see a doctor or nurse to have another type of emergency contraception called a copper intrauterine device or 'coil' inserted into the womb (this does not interfere with the action of other medicines);

or:

- take a double dose of levonorgestrel emergency contraception. The pharmacist will give you 2 packs, which should be taken together at the same time

### **Further information about levonorgestrel emergency contraception**

Levonorgestrel is a hormonal type of emergency contraception. It can be used within 3 days (72 hours) after unprotected sex or failure of a usual contraceptive method.

Levonorgestrel emergency contraception may not prevent pregnancy every time. It works best the sooner it is taken—preferably within 12 hours.

### **Advice for women taking levonorgestrel emergency contraception:**

- see your doctor or nurse for advice on effective ongoing contraception
- do a pregnancy test to ensure that you are not pregnant if your period does not come at the right time or if you suspect you could be pregnant
- if the test is positive and you are pregnant (even after taking levonorgestrel), see a doctor or nurse as soon as possible to ensure that you receive the best care
- read the leaflet that comes with levonorgestrel, which provides further information about this emergency contraception including any potential side effects
- if you think that you may have had a side effect after taking levonorgestrel, remember you can report it on a [Yellow Card](https://yellowcard.mhra.gov.uk/) (<https://yellowcard.mhra.gov.uk/>)