

What you need to know

- Emergency contraception is often referred to as "the morning after pill"
- It is a single tablet (Levonelle) that can be taken up to 72 hours after unprotected intercourse
- It consists of high dose progesterone
- Very few side effects
- Cost €80 (consultation and tablet included)

Levonelle

Levonelle consists of one tablet of a hormone called progestogen which is similar to that contained in the "mini-pill". It is to be taken as soon as possible after the episode of unprotected intercourse. Here is a guide to the effectiveness of Levonelle, based on how many hours have passed since you had unprotected sex.

- Within 24 hours – 95%
- Between 25-48 hours – 85%
- Between 49-72 hours – 58%

Most women do not experience side effects after taking emergency contraception but occasionally women may feel sick or experience a headache for a short time. Most will have a normal period when they would expect it, but sometimes it may come earlier or later than expected. Some women may also experience spotting until their next period. If your period is more than five days late you should see your doctor for a pregnancy test.

How does it work

The pill works in a variety of ways:

- may cause delay in ovulation
- slows down the passage of sperm
- slows down the movement of the egg
- create hormones changes in the womb which may prevent a fertilised egg attaching itself to the lining of the womb