

The Prudent Prescriber

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Preventeza Emergency Contraception from Vagisil

Plan B had a clever product rollout and name. Now Vagisil, whose website opens with the bold,

"Have a vagina? Let's talk!"

has entered the emergency contraception market.

A study by Daniels *et al.* (NCHS data brief #112, 2013) showed that in the United States, 1 in 9 reproductive aged women used emergency contraception at least once between 2006–2010.

- Ulipristal (Ella, \$40/30mg tab) and copper IUDs are more effective than levonorgestrel as emergency contraception, but require a clinician visit and a prescription. A study in (*Contraception*. 2018; 97 (3) 264) showed that in a secret shopper study of 533 retail pharmacies in 10 large cities in the U.S., less than 10% of the pharmacies indicated the ability to immediately fill a prescription for Ulipristal.
- Counsel women that the efficacy of levonorgestrel falls as BMI increases above 30kg/m². These women should be offered a copper releasing IUD as first-line therapy for preventing pregnancy.
- Levonorgestrel is most effective if taken within 72 hours of unprotected intercourse, Ulipristal within 5 days and a copper containing IUD within 5 days or even as long as 7 days.
- Be aware and caution your patients that there are a slew of similar products with levonorgestrel 1.5mg on the market now. They are all behind-the-counter and online and available to all genders and all ages without a prescription. They do differ significantly in price!

Pharm Reps ≠ Rational Prescribing

(PR)



(RP)

Antibiotics do
NOT

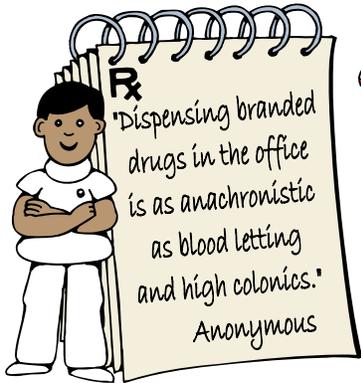


help
acute bronchitis

**β-blockers in
post-MI
save
lives**



Pill splitters save
BIG



CHE?

Think:

Ace
Aldactone
B-blocker
Dig
Diuretic



Avoid these expensive
"me-too" drugs:



Intermezzo
Vimovo
Livalo
Gralise
Viibryd
Edarbi
Daliresp

Treat patients
> 60 years to 150/90



NOW AVAILABLE
ON THE
GENERIC MARQUEE

Viagra→sildenafil
Effient→prasugel
Strattera→atomoxetine
Asacol HD→mesalamine DR
Pristiq→desvenlafaxine

A secret shopper called 12 Grand Valley pharmacies on September 11, 2018. The script, "I am interested in buying some emergency contraception today. Do you have that available today? Which products do you have? How much does it cost?"

All of the products named by the pharmacies listed below are levonorgestrel 1.5mg. None of the pharmacies reported stocking ulipristal (Ella)

Pharmacy	Product	Cost/unit
Safeway Horizon	My Way	\$50, none available at time of call
City Market – 12 th Street	Plan B	\$50
Walgreens – 240 Park	Plan B	\$39.99
Canyon View Pharmacy	- - - - -	Do not carry emergency contraception
Rite Aid – 12 th Street	Option 2	\$39.99
Walmart Rim Rock	Take Action	\$35
Walgreens – North Avenue	Take Action	\$39.99
Target	Plan B	\$47.49
Palisade Pharmacy	My Way	\$25.19
City Market – Fruita	Plan B	\$49.99
Walgreens – Fruita	Take Action	\$39.99
Walgreens – Clifton	Take Action	\$39.99

The products below also all contain levonorgestrel 1.5mg. As of early September, 2018, they were all available at Amazon.com at these listed prices.

- My Way \$11/tab, \$19.50/2 tabs, \$28/3 tabs
- My Choice \$14.95/tab
- AfterPill \$22/tab
- Preventeza \$24.57/tab
- Take Action \$29.95/tab
- Plan B 1Step \$37.12/tab

I purchased 3 My Way tabs from Amazon Prime for \$28, expiration dates 6/2021.

The Mesa County Public Health Department (248-6900) offers emergency contraception for \$0-\$25, dependent on the patient's ability to pay.

My Take:

In an environment where:

- ❖ The United States ranks last (worst) among industrialized countries in percentage of UNPLANNED pregnancies, 50%!
- ❖ The federal government continues to threaten withdrawal of funds from Planned Parenthood and Title X programs.
- ❖ Long Acting Reversible Contraception (LARC) methods (IUDs and Nexplanon) are only slowly gaining traction.

Emergency contraception can be an inexpensive, modestly effective, albeit unsustainable, form of birth control.

The issues of cost in pharmacies and patient awareness remain significant barriers to widespread use. Amazon Prime won't get it if the condom breaks.

- ✓ Is it time to resurrect the ACOG program of 20 years ago that widely promoted Plan B?
- ✓ Would it be reasonable for gynecologists, family physicians and yes, pediatricians to stock one of the inexpensive internet available levonorgestrel products and dispense them with well teenage/woman visits with appropriate counseling?

Drugs Going Generic Soon

Although greed has spread from branded Big Pharma to many generic manufacturers, competition among multiple generic drug companies still offers favorable pharmacoeconomics.

Here are some commonly prescribed branded products going generic in the coming months. Remember that drug manufacturers play all sorts of legal mumbo jumbo games to retain their patents as long as possible.

Branded Drug	Generic name	Current Branded Cost per unit	Predicted availability of generic
Cialis	tadalafil	\$17.61 per 10mg tab	September 2018
Levitra	vardenafil	\$53.48 per 20mg tab	October 2018
Symbicort	budesonide/ formoterol	\$312.65 per inhaler	Late 2018
Fortesta	testosterone	\$161.02 per gel pump	November 2018
Restasis	cyclosporine	\$8.81 per vial	Early 2019
Vesicare	solifenacin	\$12.70 per 10mg tab	May 2019
Uloric	febuxostat	\$9.83 per 40mg tab	June 2019
Lyrica	pregabalin	\$7.30 per 75mg cap	July 2019
Eliquis	apixaban	\$7.28 per 5mg tab	2019
Chantix	varenicline	\$7.71 per 0.5mg-1mg tab	May 2020

Adapted from GoodRx, email dated July 2018. Prices researched on GoodRx September 24, 2018.

You may access previous issues at <https://www.rmhp.org/i-am-a-provider/provider-resources/publications-for-providers>.

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