



AskDoctor
Dr Karuhanga



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Is it safe to use the morning-after pill multiple times a month?

I sometimes take Postinor the morning after intimacy, sometimes two or three times a month. Is this safe, and are there other emergency contraception methods I can use? Lorettah

Dear Lorettah,

The pill commonly referred to as the "morning-after pill" is actually known as emergency contraception. This short-term birth control method is used after situations such as unprotected sex, rape, or if a condom breaks or slips off, to prevent an unwanted pregnancy.

In Uganda, the primary forms of emergency contraception include hormonal pills (such as Postinor) and the copper IUD, which can be effective up to five days after unprotected sex. The effectiveness of these methods is highest when they are used as soon as possible after the incident.

Postinor, specifically an emergency contraceptive pill, is not intended for regular use. It should



only be used in emergencies. Frequent use (more than once a month) can lead to side effects such as nausea, fatigue, headaches, breast tenderness, and hormonal imbalances, and may reduce its effectiveness compared to regular birth control methods. Additionally, it can disrupt the regularity of menstrual cycles, causing periods to come earlier or later than expected, or to be heavier or lighter than usual.

It is also important to note that emergency contraceptive pills do not offer ongoing protection throughout the menstrual cycle and do not protect against sexually

transmitted infections. Relying on them repeatedly may, therefore, increase the risk of unintended pregnancy compared to using a consistent contraceptive method.

If a woman finds herself needing emergency contraception every month or multiple times in a month, it may be time to speak with a qualified health provider about starting a regular, long-term, and more effective method of contraception. These include daily pills, injectables, implants, or an IUD, which can provide more reliable protection and better support overall reproductive health.