

For Immediate Release  
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**Plan B Decision by FDA a Victory for Common Sense**  
*Yet women of all ages deserve access to emergency contraception*

Madison – The Wisconsin Alliance for Women's Health (WAWH) commends the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) for its decision to approve over-the-counter status for Plan B emergency contraception (EC) for women 18 and older. Contrary to the recommendations of the American Academy of Pediatrics, the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists and other medical groups, those 17 and younger will still need to have a prescription, despite no medical evidence that the drug is unsafe for use by younger teens.

"Today's announcement is an important victory and long overdue. Women need timely access to backup birth control," said WAWH Director Sara Finger. "Yet we remain watchful of the continued threat of pharmacists refusing to fill birth control prescriptions, emergency rooms not consistently dispensing EC to rape victims, and the restriction of teens' access to services and information to prevent unintended pregnancies."

EC is simply a concentrated dose of ordinary birth control pills which lowers the risk of pregnancy when started within 120 hours of unprotected intercourse. Experts estimate that wide access to EC could prevent up to 1.5 million unintended pregnancies and 800,000 abortions a year. The sooner EC is administered after unprotected intercourse, the better it works, making timely access critically important. Studies show that women do not use EC as a regular method of birth control. EC has **no** effect on an established pregnancy.

Every year, 820,000 teens get pregnant in the U.S.; here in Wisconsin, 10,000 teens become pregnant yearly. Research shows that over-the-counter access to emergency contraception does not increase or encourage sexual activity among teens, and better access to proven prevention methods like accurate sex education and emergency birth control are the best ways to reduce the alarming rate of teen pregnancy in this country.

WAWH is dedicated to educating women of *all* ages about EC and helping them access emergency contraception.

"As a public health concern, we cannot allow reproductive health care to be marginalized from women's general health care. Therefore we must remove all barriers to safe and effective methods of preventing unintended pregnancies," said Finger.

To learn more about emergency contraception, visit the WAWH website at: [www.wiawh.org](http://www.wiawh.org)

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*The mission of the Wisconsin Alliance for Women's Health (WAWH) is to advance women's health by creating an environment in which the public and elected officials confidently support women's health policy.  
To learn more about WAWH, visit our website: [www.supportwomenshealth.org](http://www.supportwomenshealth.org)*