

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS
SOUTHWESTERN MEDICAL CENTER
AT DALLAS

Emily A. Hinton, M.D.

Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology

February 6, 2004

Mark B. McClellan, MD, PhD
Commissioner of Food and Drugs
U.S. Food and Drug Administration
5600 Fisher Lane,
Rockville, Maryland 20857

Dear Dr. McClellan:

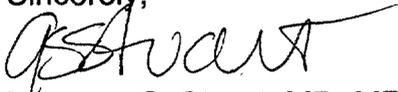
I am writing as a concerned citizen to support over-the-counter (OTC) status for Plan B emergency contraceptive pills (ECPs). The scientific literature clearly supports this change. I agree with the FDA advisory panel's finding that the data shows levonorgestrel ECPs to be safe and effective for reducing unintended pregnancy and that it is appropriate for over-the-counter use. I urge you to support unrestricted OTC access to ECPs.

Concerns that ECPs are not safe are unsubstantiated by the scientific evidence presented to the FDA on December 16th. Concerns that emergency contraception cause increased sexual activity among adolescents and teens are equally unfounded. Research shows that ECPs do not increase sexual activity and that they have a significant public health benefit by reducing unintended pregnancies among women of all ages, including teens.

The sooner emergency contraceptive pills are taken after unprotected intercourse, the more effective they can be. Evidence shows that some women still find it difficult or impossible to get emergency contraception from a provider or health care professional in time. Like most of my colleagues, I am not available to provide it 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

The evidence is clear: ECPs should be available over-the-counter for the women who can benefit. All women deserve the opportunity to safely and effectively protect themselves from unintended pregnancy.

Sincerely,



Gretchen S. Stuart, MD, MPHTM
Assistant Professor

GSS/bgs

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