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PATIENT & CAREGIVER EDUCATION

# Levonorgestrel (Systemic)

This information from Lexicomp<sup>®</sup> explains what you need to know about this medication, including what it's used for, how to take it, its side effects, and when to call your healthcare provider.

## Brand Names: US

Aftera [OTC]; EContra EZ [OTC]; EContra One-Step [OTC]; Fallback Solo [OTC] [DSC]; My Choice [OTC]; My Way [OTC]; New Day [OTC]; Next Choice One Dose [OTC] [DSC]; Opcicon One-Step [OTC]; Plan B One-Step [OTC]; React [OTC]; Take Action [OTC]

## What is this drug used for?

- It is used to lower the chance of pregnancy after unprotected sex.

## What do I need to tell the doctor BEFORE my child takes this drug?

- If your child is allergic to this drug; any part of this drug; or any other drugs, foods, or substances. Tell the doctor about the allergy and what signs your child had.

## If your child is pregnant:

- Do not give this drug to your child if she is pregnant.

This drug may interact with other drugs or health problems.

Tell the doctor and pharmacist about all of your child's drugs (prescription or OTC, natural products, vitamins) and health problems. You must check to make sure that it is safe for your child to take this drug with all of his/her drugs and health problems. Do not start, stop, or change the dose of any drug your child takes without checking with the doctor.

### **What are some things I need to know or do while my child takes this drug?**

- Tell all of your child's health care providers that your child is taking this drug. This includes your child's doctors, nurses, pharmacists, and dentists.
- This drug will not end a pregnancy.
- This drug is not for regular use to prevent pregnancy.
- This drug does not stop the spread of diseases like HIV or hepatitis that are passed through having sex. Be sure your child does not have any kind of sex without using a latex or polyurethane condom.
- Have your child use birth control to prevent pregnancy.
- Certain drugs or herbal products could cause this drug to not work as well. Be sure your child's doctor and pharmacist know

about all of your child's drugs.

- If your child's period is delayed for more than 7 days, talk with the doctor.

### **If your child is breast-feeding a baby:**

- Tell the doctor if your child is breast-feeding a baby. You will need to talk about any risks to the baby.

### **What are some side effects that I need to call my child's doctor about right away?**

**WARNING/CAUTION:** Even though it may be rare, some people may have very bad and sometimes deadly side effects when taking a drug. Tell your child's doctor or get medical help right away if your child has any of the following signs or symptoms that may be related to a very bad side effect:

- Signs of an allergic reaction, like rash; hives; itching; red, swollen, blistered, or peeling skin with or without fever; wheezing; tightness in the chest or throat; trouble breathing, swallowing, or talking; unusual hoarseness; or swelling of the mouth, face, lips, tongue, or throat.
- Very bad belly pain.

### **What are some other side effects of this drug?**

All drugs may cause side effects. However, many people have no side effects or only have minor side effects. Call your child's doctor or get medical help if any of these side effects or any other

side effects bother your child or do not go away:

- Headache.
- Upset stomach or throwing up.
- Breast soreness.
- Feeling dizzy, tired, or weak.
- Period (menstrual) changes.
- Stomach pain.

These are not all of the side effects that may occur. If you have questions about side effects, call your child's doctor. Call your child's doctor for medical advice about side effects.

You may report side effects to your national health agency.

### **How is this drug best given?**

Give this drug as ordered by your child's doctor. Read all information given to you. Follow all instructions closely.

- Give this drug within 72 hours after unprotected sex. Give it as soon as you can.
- Tell your child's doctor if your child throws up within 2 hours of taking an oral dose. Dose may need to be repeated.

### **What do I do if my child misses a dose?**

- Call your child's doctor to find out what to do.

- Do not give 2 doses at the same time or extra doses.

## **How do I store and/or throw out this drug?**

- Store at room temperature in a dry place. Do not store in a bathroom.
- Keep all drugs in a safe place. Keep all drugs out of the reach of children and pets.
- Throw away unused or expired drugs. Do not flush down a toilet or pour down a drain unless you are told to do so. Check with your pharmacist if you have questions about the best way to throw out drugs. There may be drug take-back programs in your area.

## **General drug facts**

- If your child's symptoms or health problems do not get better or if they become worse, call your child's doctor.
- Do not share your child's drug with others and do not give anyone else's drug to your child.
- Some drugs may have another patient information leaflet. If you have any questions about this drug, please talk with your doctor, nurse, pharmacist, or other health care provider.
- If you think there has been an overdose, call your poison control center or get medical care right away. Be ready to tell or show what was taken, how much, and when it happened.

## **Consumer Information Use and Disclaimer**

This information should not be used to decide whether or not to take this medicine or any other medicine. Only the healthcare provider has the knowledge and training to decide which medicines are right for a specific patient. This information does not endorse any medicine as safe, effective, or approved for treating any patient or health condition. This is only a brief summary of general information about this medicine. It does NOT include all information about the possible uses, directions, warnings, precautions, interactions, adverse effects, or risks that may apply to this medicine. This information is not specific medical advice and does not replace information you receive from the healthcare provider. You must talk with the healthcare provider for complete information about the risks and benefits of using this medicine.

### **Last Reviewed Date**

2020-02-03

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If you have any questions, contact a member of your healthcare team directly. If you're a patient at MSK and you need to reach a provider after 5:00 PM, during the weekend, or on a holiday, call 212-639-2000.

For more resources, visit [www.mskcc.org/pe](http://www.mskcc.org/pe) to search our virtual library.

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Levonorgestrel (Systemic) - Last updated on August 5, 2020

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