Mifepristone was more effective than the Yuzpe regimen for emergency contraception


**QUESTIONS:** In women seeking emergency contraception, is low dose mifepristone more effective than the Yuzpe regimen in preventing pregnancies? Does it have fewer side effects and better patient acceptability?

**Design**
Randomised (allocation concealed), unblinded, controlled trial. Women were followed up for 2 weeks after the expected next menstrual period. Women who were not pregnant were followed up until their next period.

**Setting**
A family planning clinic in Aberdeen, Scotland.

**Patients**
1000 women between 16 and 45 years of age seeking emergency contraception within 72 hours after an episode of unprotected sexual intercourse who had regular menstrual cycles (21–35 d), were certain about the dates of their last menstrual period, and were willing to abstain from further acts of unprotected intercourse during the menstrual cycle. Exclusion criteria were use of oral contraceptives or hepatic enzyme inducing drugs, chronic adrenal failure, long term corticosteroid treatment, breast feeding, allergy, or contraindications to mifepristone or to oestrogen and progestogen. Women certain to continue with pregnancy if emergency contraception failed were also excluded. 958 women (96%) (mean age 22.5 y) had complete follow up.

**Intervention**
500 women were allocated a single dose of mifepristone, 100 mg, and 500 were allocated to the Yuzpe regimen (2 tablets each with ethinyloestradiol, 50 µg, and levonorgestrel, 0.25 mg, repeated 12 h later).

**Main outcome measures**
Crude pregnancy rates, rates of prevented pregnancies, side effects, and patient acceptability.

**Main results**
Analysis was by intention to treat. Mifepristone was more effective than the Yuzpe regimen for preventing pregnancies (table). Mifepristone prevented 36 of 39 expected pregnancies (92%) and the Yuzpe regimen prevented 22 of 39 expected pregnancies (56%) \( \{p < 0.001\} \). Overall, mifepristone was better tolerated than the Yuzpe regimen. More women were satisfied \( \{p < 0.001\} \). However, information about side effects and patient acceptability was only reported by 62% of participants.

**Conclusion**
In women seeking emergency contraception within 72 hours after an episode of unprotected sexual intercourse, mifepristone given in a 100 mg dose was a more effective post-coital contraceptive than the Yuzpe regimen.

\*p value calculated from data in article.
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