

Vermont Pharmacist Prescribing Protocol – Emergency Contraception

Background

A pharmacist may prescribe FDA-approved medications used for emergency contraception in a manner consistent with a valid State protocol that is approved by the Commissioner of Health after consultation with the Director of Professional Regulation and the Board of Pharmacy (BOP). 26 V.S.A. § 2023(b)(2)(A)(xi).

Pharmacists who prescribe emergency contraception must follow this protocol. When prescribing per this protocol, the pharmacist is the prescriber-of-record.

This protocol does not apply to emergency contraceptives available without prescription, over the counter. This protocol also does not apply when a pharmacist prescribes over-the-counter emergency contraceptives where appropriate to reduce costs to the patient in accordance with 26 V.S.A. § 2023(b)(5). Over-the-counter emergency contraceptives may be purchased and distributed without a pharmacist's participation.

Definitions

Per 26 V.S.A. § 2022(22), "Emergency Contraception" means any drug approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) as a contraceptive method for use after sexual intercourse, whether provided over the counter or by prescription. This protocol applies only to self-administered emergency contraception.

"Recipient" means a person who wishes to use emergency contraception.

General considerations

Prescribing emergency contraception under this protocol requires the pharmacist to:

1. Have training and education in that area sufficient to perform the duties involved.
2. Document prescribing, including notifying the patient's primary care provider within 5 business days.
3. Keep a written copy of the protocol at each location at which prescribing emergency contraception occurs.
4. Provide a copy of the protocol available upon the request of an OPR inspector.

Procedures

When an individual requests a prescription for emergency contraception, the pharmacist shall:

1. Direct the patient to the counseling area, as required in [Administrative Rule 9.2](#), to provide reasonable privacy.
2. Screen for contraindications to emergency contraception, if contraindications exist, emergency contraception should not be prescribed.
3. When a prescription for emergency contraception is issued, counsel the patient in accordance with Vermont's Administrative Rules and provide written patient education materials about the drug prescribed. Counseling should include providing any necessary training for using the emergency contraception prescribed.
4. When a prescription for emergency contraception is issued, provide to the patient a written record of the medication prescribed.
5. Determine if the patient has a reproductive health or primary care clinician and encourage them to seek routine reproductive health/primary care. If the patient does not have such clinicians, provide referral to

patient for finding primary care services, such as [VT-211](#) or, for Medicaid beneficiaries, the [Vermont Medicaid Provider lookup](#).

Authorized Drugs

Prescribing and dispensing done pursuant to this protocol is limited to self-administered FDA-approved prescription medications used as a contraceptive method after sexual intercourse.

Prescribing Records

The pharmacist must generate a written or electronic prescription for emergency contraception pursuant to protocol-based prescribing. The prescription must include all the information required by Administrative Rule 10.1. The prescription must be processed in the same manner that any other prescription is processed, pursuant to the applicable statutes and rules for the dispensing of prescription drugs. The prescription shall be kept on file and maintained for a minimum of three years, as required by the rules of the Vermont BOP. Pharmacists are reminded to adhere to recordkeeping requirements for prescriptions paid for by Medicare and Medicaid as well as recordkeeping required by BOP.

Pharmacist Resources can be found on OPR’s “Pharmacy Statutes, Rules & Resources” webpage.

APPROVED:



Commissioner, Vermont Department of Health

Date: 10/3/23



Director, Office of Professional Regulation

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