

AMERICAN MEDICAL ASSOCIATION HOUSE OF DELEGATES

Resolution: 417
(A-05)

Introduced by: California Delegation

Subject: Emergency Contraception for Sexual Assault Victims

Referred to: Reference Committee D
(Sally J. Trippel, MD, Chair)

1 Whereas, The United States Department of Justice has just released the first National Protocol
2 for Sexual Assault Medical Forensic Examination (“Protocol”), which is used by hospitals and
3 other relevant organizations, thus making this Protocol a potentially important step toward
4 ensuring that all sexual assault victims receive high quality medical and forensic services; and
5

6 Whereas, The 130-page Protocol provides step-by-step medical treatment guidelines for sexual
7 assault patients, but does not include the recommended offering of pregnancy prophylaxis (or
8 “emergency contraception”) to sexual assault victims, which is a glaring omission that puts
9 sexual assault victims at risk for unintended pregnancy even though the Protocol does
10 recognize that “pregnancy is often an overwhelming and genuine fear” of sexual assault victims;
11 and
12

13 Whereas, Major medical groups including the American College of Obstetricians and
14 Gynecologists (ACOG), our American Medical Association and the American Public Health
15 Association support making emergency contraception more readily accessible to women to who
16 need it, and ACOG recommends that hospitals provide emergency contraception to all sexual
17 assault victims at risk of pregnancy; and
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19 Whereas, Emergency contraception has been established as being both effective and safe, with
20 many experts and the Food and Drug Administration’s own review panel recommending that it
21 be provided on an over-the-counter basis, yet “political” opposition has stymied this
22 recommendation and a similar dynamic may be behind this recent omission from the Justice
23 Department Protocol; therefore be it
24

25 RESOLVED, That our American Medical Association urge that the United States Justice
26 Department’s new National Protocol for Sexual Assault Medical Forensic Examination be
27 amended to include a full discussion and recommendations on the use of emergency
28 contraception to prevent unwanted pregnancy in sexual assault victims, in line with established
29 recommendations by the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists and other
30 relevant medical organizations. (Directive to Take Action)

Fiscal Note: Lobby accordingly at estimated staff cost of \$1,859.

Received: 5/6/05

RELEVANT AMA POLICY

D-75.997 Access to Emergency Contraception

Our AMA will: (1) intensify efforts to improve awareness and understanding about the availability of emergency contraception in the general public; and (2) support and monitor the application process of manufacturers filing for over-the-counter approval of emergency contraception pills with the Food and Drug Administration (FDA). (CMS Rep. 1, A-00)

D-75.999 Emergency Contraception Pills

Our AMA will support public health education on all forms of contraception, including emergency contraception pills (ECPs) by working in conjunction with the appropriate specialty societies and other organizations to encourage the widespread dissemination of this information. (Res. 403, A-99)

D-100.986 FDA Rejection of Over-The-Counter Status for Emergency Contraception Pills

Our AMA will: (1) issue a public statement to oppose the unprecedented actions of the Acting Director of the United States Food and Drug Administration in overruling the approval of over-the-counter access to the Plan B pill, and urge the reconsideration of this decision immediately; (2) work with the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, Physicians for Reproductive Choice and Health, local and state medical societies, and other interested organizations to continue its efforts to increase access to emergency contraception, including further lobbying of the FDA and Congress to make emergency contraception available over-the-counter; and (3) report back on the issue of increasing access to emergency contraception at the 2004 Interim Meeting. (Res. 443, A-04)

H-75.985 Access to Emergency Contraception

It is the policy of our AMA: (1) that physicians and other health care professionals should be encouraged to play a more active role in providing education about emergency contraception, including access and informed consent issues, by discussing it as part of routine family planning and contraceptive counseling; (2) to enhance efforts to expand access to emergency contraception, including making emergency contraception pills more readily available through pharmacies, hospitals, clinics, emergency rooms, acute care centers, and physicians' offices; (3) to recognize that information about emergency contraception is part of the comprehensive information to be provided as part of the emergency treatment of sexual assault victims; (4) to support educational programs for physicians and patients regarding treatment options for the emergency treatment of sexual assault victims, including information about emergency contraception; and (5) to encourage writing advance prescriptions for these pills as requested by their patients until the pills are available over-the-counter. (CMS Rep. 1, I-00; Appended: Res. 408, A-02; Modified: Res. 443, A-04)