

KNOWLEDGE AND USE OF ORAL CONTRACEPTIVE PILLS AND EMERGENCY CONTRACEPTIVE PILLS AMONG ADOLESCENTS IN SOMBOR, SERBIA

INTRODUCTION

Majority of adolescents engage in sexual relationships for the first time during the period of secondary school education, which implies the use of contraceptive methods. Our objective was to determine basic knowledge and the incidence of use of oral contraceptive pills (OCP) and emergency contraceptive pills (ECP) among adolescents in Sombor, Serbia in order to estimate whether pharmacists from community pharmacies should participate in providing basic information regarding contraceptive pills. Various contraceptive pills and only a single dose levonorgestrel postcoital contraceptive pill (without prescription over the age of sixteen) were available on the market in Serbia at the time of conducting the research.

METHODS

A 14-item structured questionnaire for male and a 16-item structured questionnaire for female adolescents were distributed throughout three different secondary schools. 173 female students and 133 male students, aged 16 and 19 years, filled in the questionnaire.



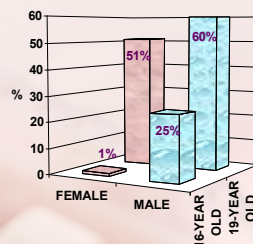
CONCLUSION

The incidence of use of emergency contraceptive pills among sexually active female adolescents is five times higher than the incidence of use of oral contraceptive pills. Basic knowledge of OCP and ECP among adolescents is poor, which is not surprising considering that most of information regarding contraceptive pills adolescents acquire from media and friends. The results suggest that community pharmacy pharmacists should work harder to actively participate in providing accurate information about OCP and ECP for adolescents. Providing information should start at the beginning of secondary school education, while majority of adolescents is still sexually inactive.

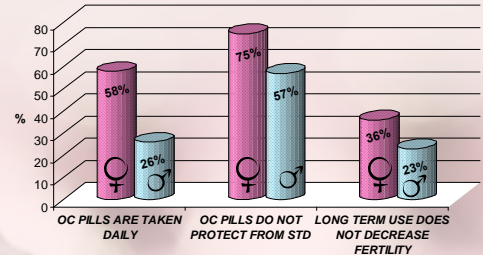


RESULTS

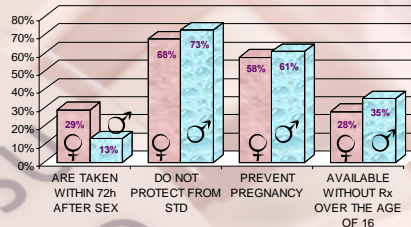
SEXUAL ACTIVITY



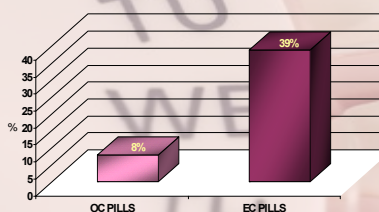
KNOWLEDGE OF OC PILLS



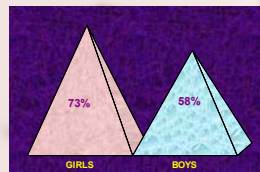
KNOWLEDGE OF EC PILLS



USE OF OC & EC PILLS AMONG SEXUALLY ACTIVE FEMALE ADOLESCENTS

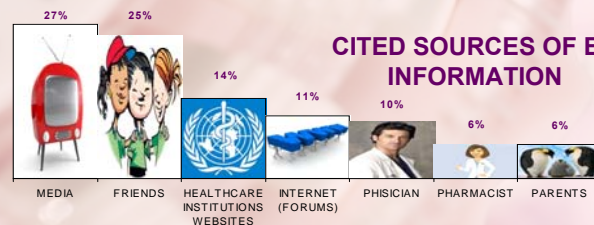


AWARENESS OF EC PILLS



From the age sixteen to the age of nineteen, number of sexually active adolescents increases rapidly. **Only half of sexually active examinees had used contraception during each intercourse**, mostly a preservative (95%). 8 % of sexually active girls used OCP, whereas 39% had used ECP at least once. One third of male adolescents thought that OCP are used in a single dose immediately before intercourse. Approximately a quarter of all examinees believed that long term use of OCP decreased female fertility. 27 % of female adolescents and 42 % of male adolescents never had heard of ECP. The most commonly cited sources of information regarding emergency contraception were media (newspaper, TV) and friends. **Only one third of cited sources were healthcare professionals and healthcare institutions official websites. Only 6% of examinees had heard of ECP from pharmacist.** Every third girl and every tenth boy that had heard of ECP identified correctly the time limit for the method use. **Approximately a half of all examinees does not know that ECP is available without prescription in community pharmacies.**

CITED SOURCES OF EC INFORMATION



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