



## **FDA revises restriction on over-the-counter access to Plan B emergency contraception to women 17 and over**

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Washington, D.C. – Today the FDA approved over-the-counter access to Plan B emergency contraception for women 17 and over, revising its earlier 18 and over restriction. This ruling reconfirms what women’s health advocates have said all along – that emergency contraception is safe and effective for use by anyone of reproductive age. Because Plan B is more effective the sooner it is taken after unprotected sex, allowing 17 year olds to access the drug over-the-counter increases their likelihood of preventing an unwanted pregnancy.

“FDA is taking the first step towards ensuring that science is the basis for its decisions on Plan B emergency contraception,” said Susan Wood, Ph.D., Research Professor at the School of Public Health and Health Services at George Washington University, and board member of the Reproductive Health Technologies Project. “The court ruling last month demonstrated confidence in FDA to appropriately evaluate the evidence on whether or not a prescription should be required for those under 17. I look forward to FDA’s scientific and medical staff doing just that, based on the science and the usual FDA process,” said Wood.

The court ruling found that the FDA broke its own rules and regulations, ignored medical consensus, as well as the expertise of its own scientists and advisory committees by holding Plan B to an arbitrarily higher standard than other OTC products. “We will continue to work with public health professionals and women’s health advocates to ensure full over-the-counter access to Plan B,” said Kirsten Moore, President and CEO of the Reproductive Health Technologies Project. “It is critically important that we work to expand access to emergency contraception so that a woman doesn’t have to play “beat the clock”, and can take control of her situation if she has had unprotected sex or contraceptive failure,” said Moore.

Plan B is an FDA-approved, back-up birth control method that can prevent pregnancy in the first few days after unprotected sex.

For more information, please visit: <http://www.rhtp.org>

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**Kirsten Moore, President and CEO, RHTP and Susan Wood, Ph.D., Research Professor, School of Public Health and Health Services, George Washington University are available for interview upon request.**