

NEWS
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
December 17, 2003

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**American College of Preventive Medicine to Host Web-Based
Conference on
Emergency Contraception and Adolescents**

Washington, D.C. – The American College of Preventive Medicine (ACPM) will host a web-based conference to present the latest information on providing emergency contraceptive pills (ECPs) to adolescents. *Emergency Contraceptive Pills and Adolescents: A Live Web Conference*, will be held January 28, 2004, beginning at 7 p.m. ET at Medscape from WebMD.

Two of the nation's leading experts on reproductive health and family planning, Dr. Melanie A. Gold of the School of Medicine and the Graduate School of Public Health at the University of Pittsburgh, and Dr. Donald F. Downing of the School of Pharmacy at the University of Washington, will deliver presentations and answer audience questions. Dr. George Lundberg, Editor of Medscape General Medicine, will moderate the session. The free conference will provide critical information for practicing physicians, public health officials, and other front-line health providers who provide primary care, reproductive health, and family planning services to adolescents or are concerned with the health and social implications of providing ECPs to adolescents.

The conference will feature an overview of the newest indications, contraindications, mechanisms of action, efficacy, and safety of ECPs. Participants will also learn the advantages and disadvantages, as related to adolescent health, of pharmacist-dispensed and over-the-counter ECPs versus provision of ECPs by other health care providers with prescriptive authority. Additionally, the speakers will address the potential impact of changes in ECP availability for adolescents' access to reproductive health care. The conference is particularly timely because scientific advisors to the Food and Drug Administration recently recommended that the FDA approve an ECP for over-the-counter use.

Adolescent girls currently face prohibitive barriers to obtaining ECPs within the narrow window of effectiveness. Many clinicians require an office visit before prescribing ECPs to their patients. Some adolescents do not have a regular health care provider and do not know how to access ECPs in a confidential manner. Doctors' offices and clinics are often closed at night and on weekends—when unprotected sex is most likely to occur.

“Health care professionals are the key source of information about pregnancy prevention and control approaches for sexually active adolescents,” according to Dr. David L. Katz, Chairperson of ACPM’s Adolescent Health Committee. “Emergency contraception can be an important option, but it's one that even many health care providers know relatively little about. This conference will enhance the ability of professionals to meet the needs of their adolescent patients for information about avoiding the crisis of unintended pregnancy.”

Information on how to participate in the January 28th web-based conference will be available starting January 14th. Go to www.medscape.com, register and log in as a free Medscape user, and search the continuing medical education (CME) Public Health and Prevention section.

The American College of Preventive Medicine is the national professional society for physicians whose expertise and interest lie in disease prevention and health promotion (www.acpm.org). ACPM's more than 2,000 members are engaged in preventive medicine practice, teaching and research. Medscape from WebMD is the leading provider of online information and educational services for physicians and health care professionals (www.medscape.com).

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The American College of Preventive Medicine (ACPM) is accredited by the Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education to provide continuing medical education for physicians. ACPM designates this educational activity for a maximum of 1.5 category 1 credits toward the AMA Physician’s Recognition Award. Each physician should claim only those credits that he/she actually spent in the activity.