



NEWS

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

LOWERING AGE LIMIT FOR SINGLE-DOSE EMERGENCY CONTRACEPTION IRRESPONSIBLE, A DISAPPOINTMENT, SAYS BISHOPS' PRO-LIFE SPOKESPERSON

WASHINGTON—The April 30 move by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to approve over-the-counter sale of “Plan B One-Step” to minors 15 years and older is a “disappointment,” said a spokesperson for the Secretariat of Pro-Life Activities of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB).

“The FDA has acted irresponsibly by approving sales of the powerful drug, single-dose Plan B, for those 15 and older,” said Deirdre McQuade, assistant director of policy and communications in the Pro-Life Secretariat. “The rule change subjects girls to risks of STDs and manipulation by others, a risk that is compounded by allowing males to purchase the drug even for girls under the age of 15.”

“Many studies have shown that wider access to so-called ‘emergency contraception’ reduces neither pregnancy nor abortion rates, but can contribute to higher rates of sexually transmitted disease, especially among young people,” McQuade said, “No public health consideration justifies the unsupervised sale of such drugs to young teens.”

McQuade added, “While the FDA is failing here in its responsibility to protect children, we continue to hope it will appeal the April 5 decision by one federal judge insisting that this drug be made readily available without any age limit at all.”

“Plan B One-Step” is a large dose of the hormonal drug levonorgestrel. It is available only by prescription when used either in two doses (in Plan B and its generic versions), or in smaller doses for ongoing contraception.

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