

Health and Medical Services for Teens in Gaston County

There are 4 Teen Wellness Centers in Gaston County.

- Many different services, all available at each location!
- Doctors and nurses are trained to respect and protect the confidentiality of their teen patients.
- Services are available to teens for free or at a very low cost.

Teen Wellness Center Services:

- Physicals and sports physicals
- Immunizations for school and college
- Birth control/family planning
- Pregnancy testing
- Teen Advocate – a professional who will work one-on-one with you to answer your questions about birth control and family planning
- Sexually Transmitted Infection (STI) testing
- Prescriptions, including prescriptions for emergency contraception

Teen Wellness Center Hours and Locations:

Gaston County Health Department

(991 W. Hudson Blvd. in Gastonia)

- **Monday, 8am-7pm**
- **Tuesday – Friday, 8am-5pm**

Cherryville Health Center

(609 E. Academy St. in Cherryville)

- **Tuesday, 8am-5pm**

Highland Health Center

(609 N. Highland St. in Gastonia)

- **Monday – Friday, 8am-5pm**

Bessemer City Healthcare Center

(119 W. Pennsylvania Ave. in Bessemer City)

- **Wednesday and Thursday, 1-5pm**

Same-day walk-in appointments are available. To reduce your waiting time, make an appointment the day before.

For an appointment
at any location:

704-853-5009 or
www.gastonpublichealth.org
and click "Appointments Online"

Other ways for teens to get medical services in Gaston County:

Teens can also visit their family physician or a private provider to get health and medical services. Some private providers may bill your parents' insurance for the services they provide. If you are worried that your parents will find out about what services you have received, ask your private provider about options for billing and payment to keep your records confidential.

North Carolina Minors' Rights to Sexual and Reproductive Health Services

In the state of North Carolina, as a minor under the age of 18 who is not legally emancipated or married, I have the right to provide informed consent to obtain:

- ◆ Confidential testing and treatment for Sexually Transmitted Diseases (STDs) or Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs)
- ◆ Confidential testing and treatment for HIV or AIDS
- ◆ Confidential access to contraceptive services
- ◆ Confidential prenatal care, including pregnancy testing and ultrasound services

I have the right to access all of the above services without obtaining parental permission or consent and without my parents/guardian being notified by my doctor or pharmacist.

Things to consider when seeking health services:

- Ask questions about confidentiality when making your appointment.
- Ask how billing information and your records are kept confidential.
- Inform the clinic staff how to contact you for future appointments or for test results.
- Ask about payment options. Almost all clinics provide free or sliding-scale fee services to teens in order to make it easier for teens to pay with cash.
- If you pay for your visit by using your family's health insurance, just remember that your parents are likely to see the bill when it arrives in the mail.

As a young person, it is your right to get confidential sexual and reproductive health care where you feel safe and comfortable. You also have the right to leave your appointment at any time if you feel uncomfortable in any way.

Facts about Emergency Contraception

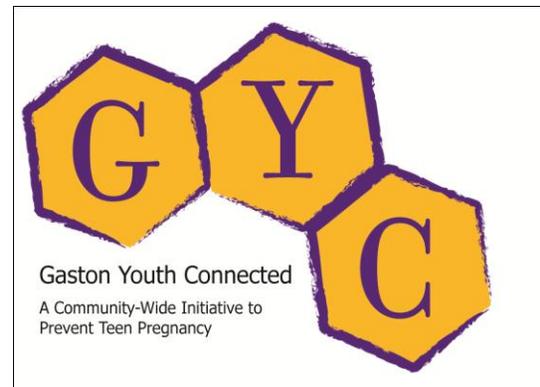
- Emergency birth control pills can be taken for up to 5 days (120 hours) after a woman has unprotected sex to prevent pregnancy. *ella* is effective for up to 5 days after sex. *Plan B One-Step*, *Next Choice One Dose*, and *Next Choice* can be taken up to 5 days after sex but are most effective when taken on the first, second, or third day after sex.
- Emergency contraception is NOT an abortion pill. Emergency birth control cannot terminate a pregnancy that has already begun. Emergency birth control pills contain exactly the same drugs and work in exactly the same way as regular birth control pills.
- You can get certain types of emergency contraception without a prescription if you are at least 17 years old. If you are 17 or older, you can get these types of emergency contraception at pharmacies and health centers, like the Gaston County Health Department. If you are younger than 17, you need to go to a health center to get a prescription first. *ella* requires a prescription first, no matter how old you are.

Type of EC	Window of effectiveness	Do you need a prescription?
<i>ella</i>	Up to 5 days after sex, no decrease in effectiveness during that time	<i>ella</i> requires a prescription no matter how old you are.
<i>Plan B One-Step</i> , <i>Next Choice One Dose</i> , and <i>Next Choice</i>	Up to 5 days after sex, but decreases in effectiveness after the 3 rd day	Available without a prescription if you are 17 or older. Requires a prescription if you are younger than 17.

- Males can purchase emergency contraception at pharmacies and health centers, too. For example, a male could go get emergency contraception for his female partner or friend if she can't go to the pharmacy herself. The same rules about age apply to males and females. Also, males and females can get emergency contraception ahead of time to keep on hand just in case they need it.
- In North Carolina, a pharmacist can refuse to provide emergency contraception to someone who needs it. HOWEVER, by law they must provide that person with accurate information about an alternative place where they can get emergency contraception. This might include having another person who works at their pharmacy (such as a technician or intern) provide the emergency contraception or telling them about another pharmacy they can go to.
- Emergency contraception is available for teens at the Teen Wellness Center at the Gaston County Health Department.

Sources:

Emergency Contraception: Barriers to Access. National Women's Law Center. 2011.
FAQs for Pharmacists on Conscience Clause. North Carolina Board of Pharmacy. 2005.
Morning-After Pill (Emergency Contraception). Health Info & Services. Planned Parenthood. 2011.
The Emergency Contraception Website. Office of Population Research, Princeton University. 2012.



www.gastonyouthconnected.org