

**A STUDY ON THE MISUSE OF EMERGENCY CONTRACEPTIVE PILLS IN
INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER LEARNING IN THIKA TOWN, KIAMBU COUNTY**

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**A RESEARCH PROJECT SUBMITTED TO THE SCHOOL OF PHARMACY IN
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ABSTRACT

The ready availability of emergency contraceptive pills over the counter without advice/counseling on the implications of frequent use poses a health risk to women who frequently consume the pills. Emergency contraceptive pills abuse is threatening to replace regular methods of contraception and health care Providers need to have clear guidelines on how and when to offer emergency contraceptive pills and must give clear instructions to clients in order to avoid misuse. This emphasizes the need for further counseling on routine contraceptive methods, as most other methods are more effective for regular use. This study was aimed at assessing the level of misuse of emergency contraceptive pills in institutions of higher learning in Thika town, Kiambu County. The research design employed was a descriptive research design. A cross-sectional descriptive survey was carried out among women aged 18 to 37 Years in institutions of higher learning in Thika town. The study used a questionnaire-based descriptive study. Respondents sampled were (322) Three hundred and twenty two students from four institutions of higher learning namely Mount Kenya university ,Thika school of medical and health sciences ,Thika Technical Training Institute and Jodan College of Technology. To randomize the statistic and to avoid biasness of any kind, the information was collected from each institution; ninety samples from each institution except Jodan College of technology which had a relative low number of students and only fifty two samples were taken. From the data analyzed most of the female students knew what e-pills were and what they are used for and this can be accounted for by 94%. From the data it can be concluded that 67% of the female students sampled were using or had used contraceptive while in school while 33% had never used e-pills. 37% of respondents used e-pills twice while 3% used thrice and 1% used it more than thrice. This accumulated to 41% misuse of e-pills. Females between the age of 23-27 Years Misused emergency contraceptive pills the most in higher learning institutions accounting for 21% followed by female group of between 18-22 years (12%), 28-32Years(8%) , and 33-37 Years(1%) respectively. Most respondents indicated that the use of ECP had side effects at 60% while 33% noted that e-pills had no side effects and 7% did not report any side effects of e-pills. From the data obtained its evident that ECP misuse is taking place and there is a great need for counseling services to be provided and health care Providers need to have clear guidelines on how and when to offer ECP and must give clear instructions to clients in order to avoid misuse.