

## NEW YORK

# Teen use of morning-after pill is climbing, report says

**By Mike Stobbe**

*Of The Associated Press*

**NEW YORK »** More than 1 in 5 sexually active teen girls have used the morning-after pill — a dramatic increase that likely reflects that it's easier now for teens to buy the emergency contraceptive.

A report released Wednesday shows teen use of the morning-after pill rose steadily from a decade earlier, when it was 1 in 12. Now, all teens can buy it without a prescription.

The finding comes from a Centers for Disease Control and Prevention survey that's considered the government's best source of information on teen sex and contraception use.

The report showed little recent change in most

other types of birth control used by teen girls who have had sex. Almost all said they said they've used condoms at some point, and more than half have used the pill.

The fact that more teen girls bought the morning-after pill after it became more accessible is a sign that "teens, like adults, often are not very good at contraception," said Bill Albert, chief program officer for the National Campaign to Prevent Teen and Unplanned Pregnancy.

"In the battle between sex and sex with contraception, sex often wins," he said.

The morning-after pill contains a higher dose of the female hormone progesterin than is in regular birth control pills. It can cut the chances of pregnancy by nearly 90 percent if taken

within 72 hours of unprotected sex. Starting in 2006, teens 18 and older could buy it over the counter; age limits were lifted two years ago. It typically costs \$35 to \$50.

The CDC report is based on interviews with about 2,000 people, ages 15 to 19 from 2011 to 2013.

One of the report's main findings has been the proportion of teens who said they've had sex. Those figures steadily fell from the late 1980s until the early 2000s — a decrease commonly attributed to improved sex education and greater concern by teens about AIDS and other sexually spread diseases.

Experts believe a decline in teen sexual activity and better contraception use have driven an astounding drop in teen birth rates since 1991.