

The Availability of Plan B Emergency Contraception in Arizona Pharmacies

Results of a 2007 joint research project conducted by NARAL Pro-Choice Arizona and Planned Parenthood of Central and Northern Arizona and the Arizona Family Planning Council.

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Project Background and Methodology

The purpose of the research project was to identify which Arizona pharmacies are stocking the emergency contraceptive Plan B and making it available immediately over the counter without a prescription for consumers 18 and older and with a prescription for consumers under 18.

Research began with a sample size of 1,017 Arizona pharmacies, of which 811 were contacted resulting in a response rate of 80%. Pharmacies that declared themselves as non-retail at the time of contact were excluded from the analysis.

Sampling Methodology	n	Percentage
Contact	811	100%
Non retail of non applicable pharmacies	131	16%
Sample used in analysis	680	84%

Project Background and Methodology

The research was also designed to understand possible differences between regions within Arizona. Regions were broken down into Maricopa County, Pima County, and rural areas to uncover potential disparities between regions for accessing Plan B.

Region	Number of pharmacies contacted	Percentage
Maricopa	473	70%
Pima	118	17%
Rural	89	13%

Additionally segmented were the nationwide pharmacies and the local businesses in order to uncover any differences in large pharmacies availability of Emergency Contraception and smaller statewide pharmacies.

Pharmacy	Number of Pharmacies	Percentage
CVS Pharmacies	88	13%
Fry's Food and Drug	94	14%
Safeway Food and Drug	82	12%
Target	31	5%
Walgreens	173	25%
Wal-Mart	34	5%
All others (local and independent)	178	39%

Executive Summary

What is Emergency Contraception?

- Emergency Contraception (EC) prevents pregnancy after an incidence of unprotected sexual intercourse including contraceptive failures
- Wide spread use of EC in the United States could reduce the number of unintended pregnancies by 49%
 - Potentially reducing the number of abortions by 50%
- EC may have prevented as many as 51,000 abortions in 2000*
- Knowledge and use of EC remains low in the United States
 - EC contains the same hormones as regular oral contraceptives
- EC does not cause abortion is not an abortion pill.
- 53% of US women who experience an unintended pregnancy report the pregnancy was the result of a contraceptive failure

*An estimation study conducted by the Guttmacher Institute

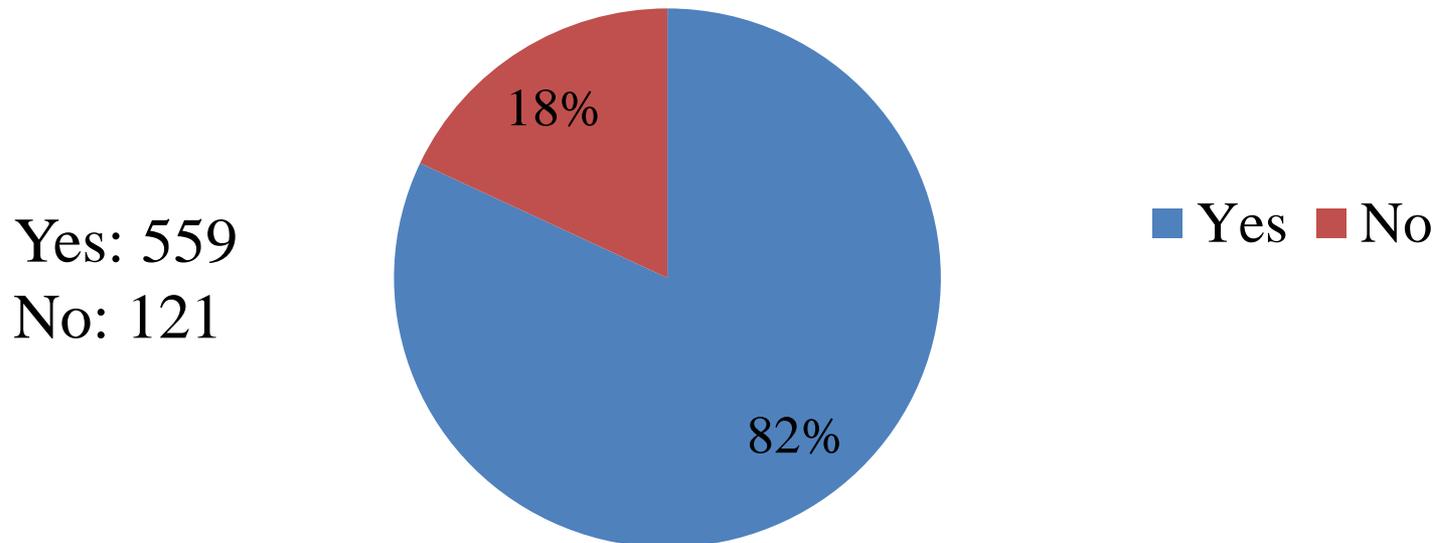
EC in the US

- Gynecologists have been prescribing ordinary oral contraception tablets in exacting doses to inhibit or delay ovulation following an incidence of unprotected intercourse for decades.
- The Emergency Contraceptive, Plan B, has been available in the United States since 1999 but only with a doctor's prescription.
- On August 24th 2006 the U.S. Food and Drug Administration approved Plan B for sale without a prescription to women 18 and older.
- Plan B is sold only in pharmacies, including those in grocery stores and must be kept behind the counter.
- The sooner Plan B is taken, the more effective it is. If taken within 24 hours of an act of unprotected sexual intercourse the rate of failure is .4%. When Plan B is taken between 48 and 72 hours after unprotected sex, the failure rate increases to 2.7%.

The Results

680 pharmacies around the state of Arizona were contacted and asked if they carried the Emergency Contraceptive Plan B, also known as the morning after pill. The caller also stated that the need for the medication was urgent.

- ☐ Over 80% of pharmacies contacted state that they had Plan B in stock or would order it immediately.

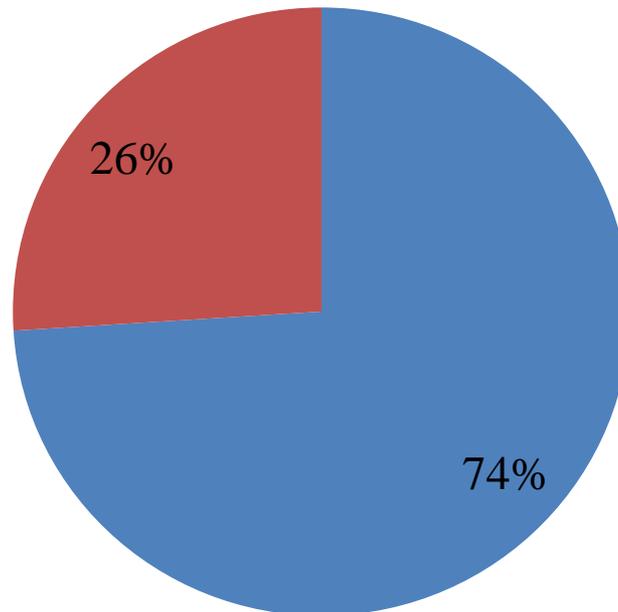


The Results

If the pharmacist stated they did not have Plan B in stock, an inquiry was made as to why, as Plan B is now available to women over the age of 18 without a prescription.

- ☐ Nearly three quarters of pharmacists said that they would order Plan B. Over one quarter simply did not carry Plan B and did not indicate that they would be willing to order it.

We carry or will
order Plan B: 90
We do not carry
Plan B: 31



- We carry or will order Plan B
- We do not carry Plan B

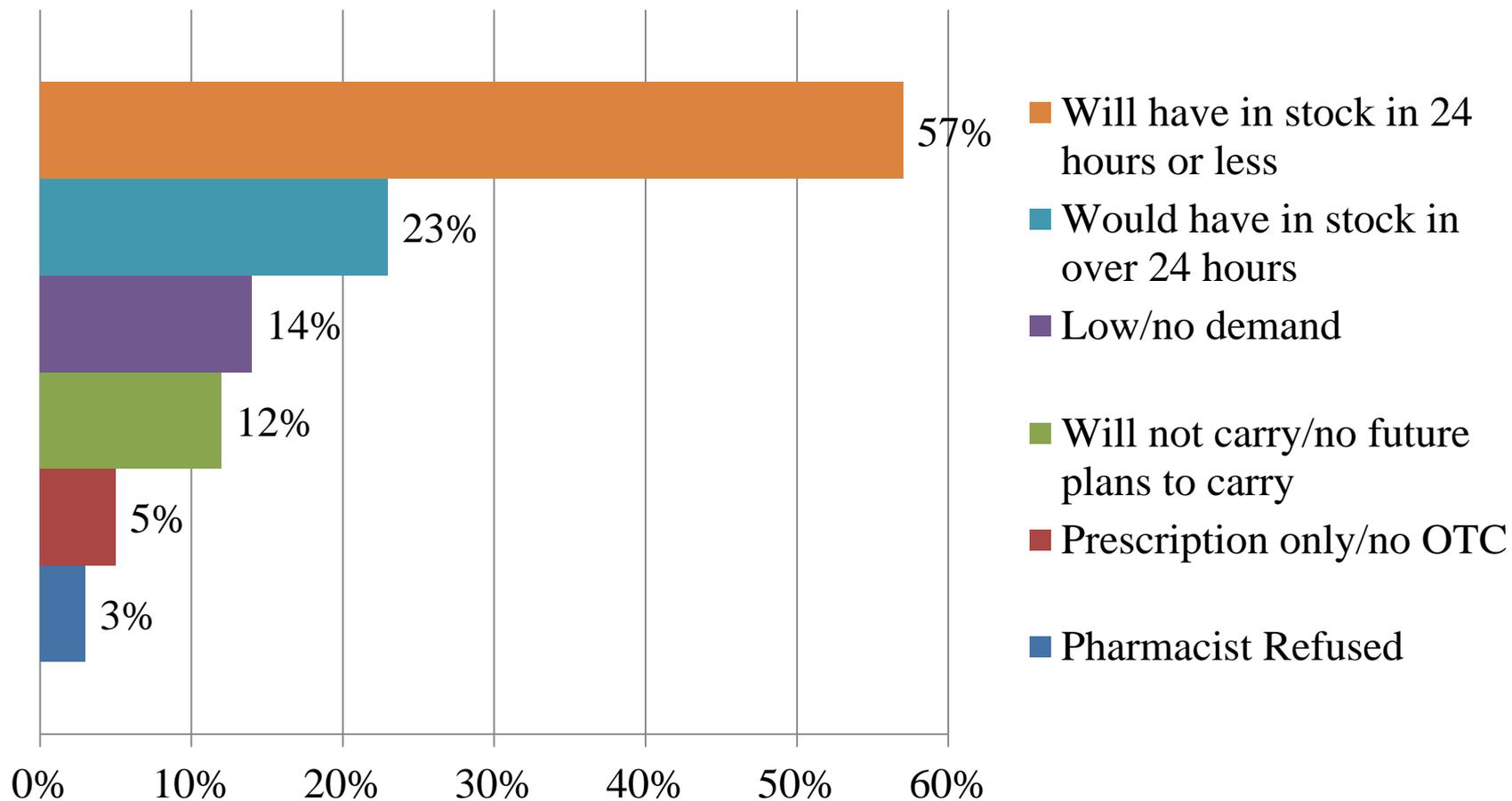
If the answer is NO – *Can you get it for me? When?* N=121

The Results

For all pharmacists who indicated in the first question they did not have Plan B in stock the graph on the next slide outlines the various reasons given

- Nearly 60%* of these pharmacists said that they would have Plan B for a patient in 24 hours or less
- Almost one quarter indicated that it would take more than 24 hours to have Plan B in stock
- Fifteen percent said they had no future plans to carry Plan B or did not carry it due to a pharmacist refusal

Graph on next slide.



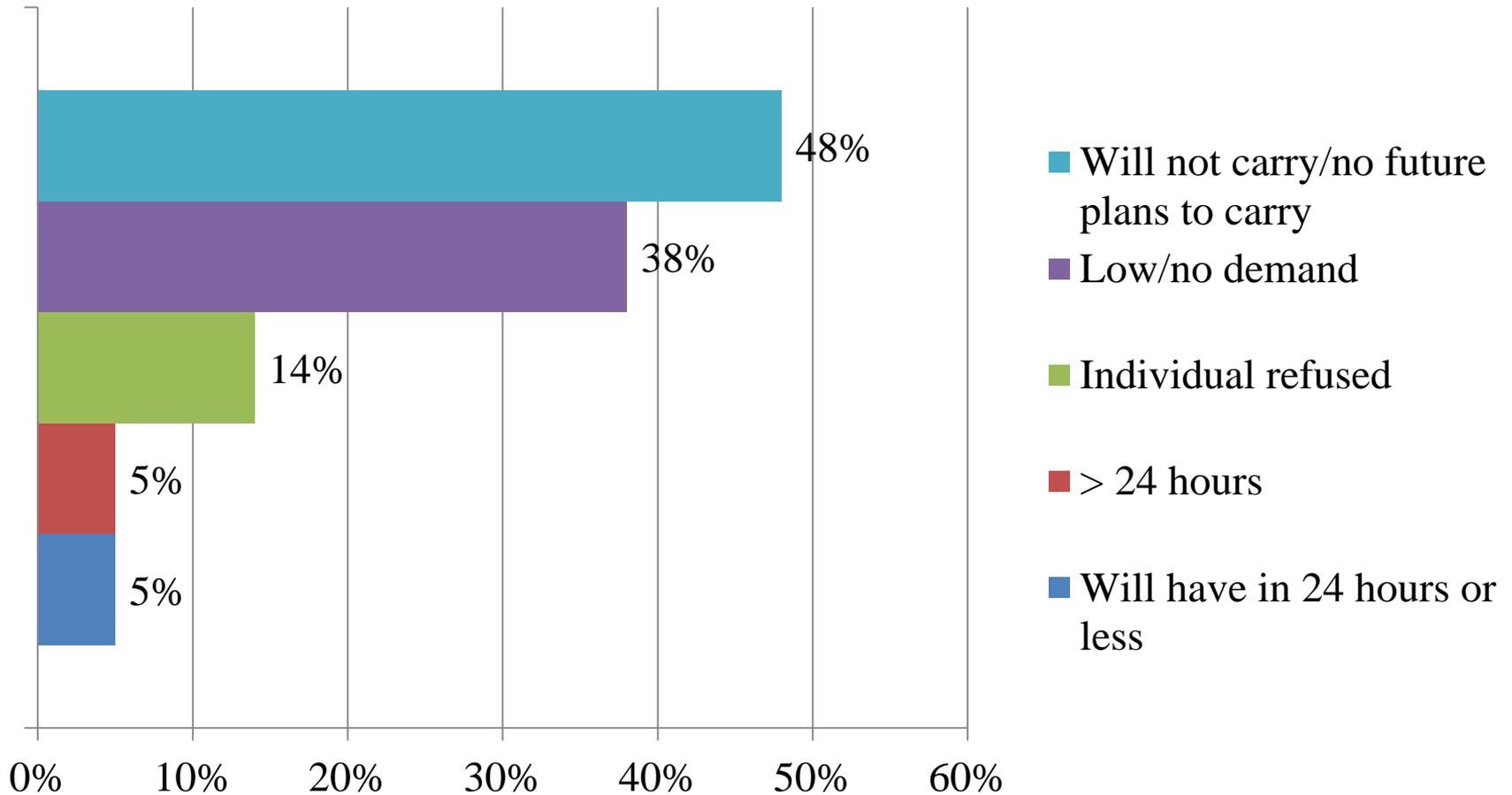
If the answer is we can't get it or it will take more than 12 hours – *How come you don't have it? Didn't it go over the counter?* N=86

*Pharmacists were permitted to selected more than 1 response, leading percentages to total over 100%

The Results

The 31 pharmacists who responded that they did not carry or could not get Plan B in less than 24 hours were questioned further as to why.

- Nearly 50%* of these pharmacists said they would not carry or had no plans to carry Plan B in the future
- Only 5% indicated that they could have Plan B in stock in 24 hours or less
- Fourteen percent said they did not carry Plan B due to a pharmacist refusal
- Graph on next slide



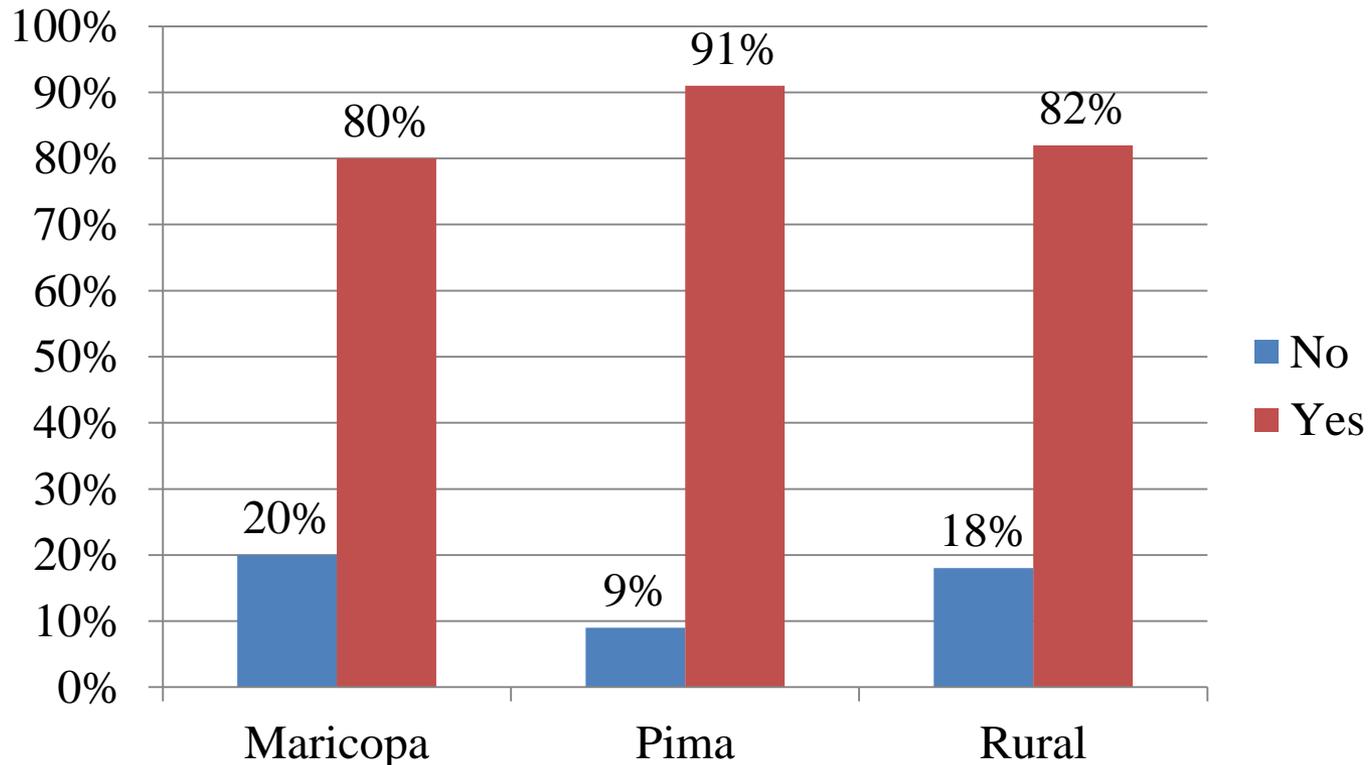
If the answer is we can't get it or it will take more than 24 hours – *How come you don't have it? Didn't it go over the counter?* N=21

*Pharmacists were permitted to selected more than 1 response, lending percentages to total over 100%.

Responses by Region

Pharmacy responses were broken down by region in order to analyze potentially under serviced populations.

- Pima County pharmacies carried Plan B at statistically significant higher rates than Maricopa County
- While Pima County carried Plan B at higher rates than rural counties this difference was not significant (these differences in significance are due to the differences in the n's)

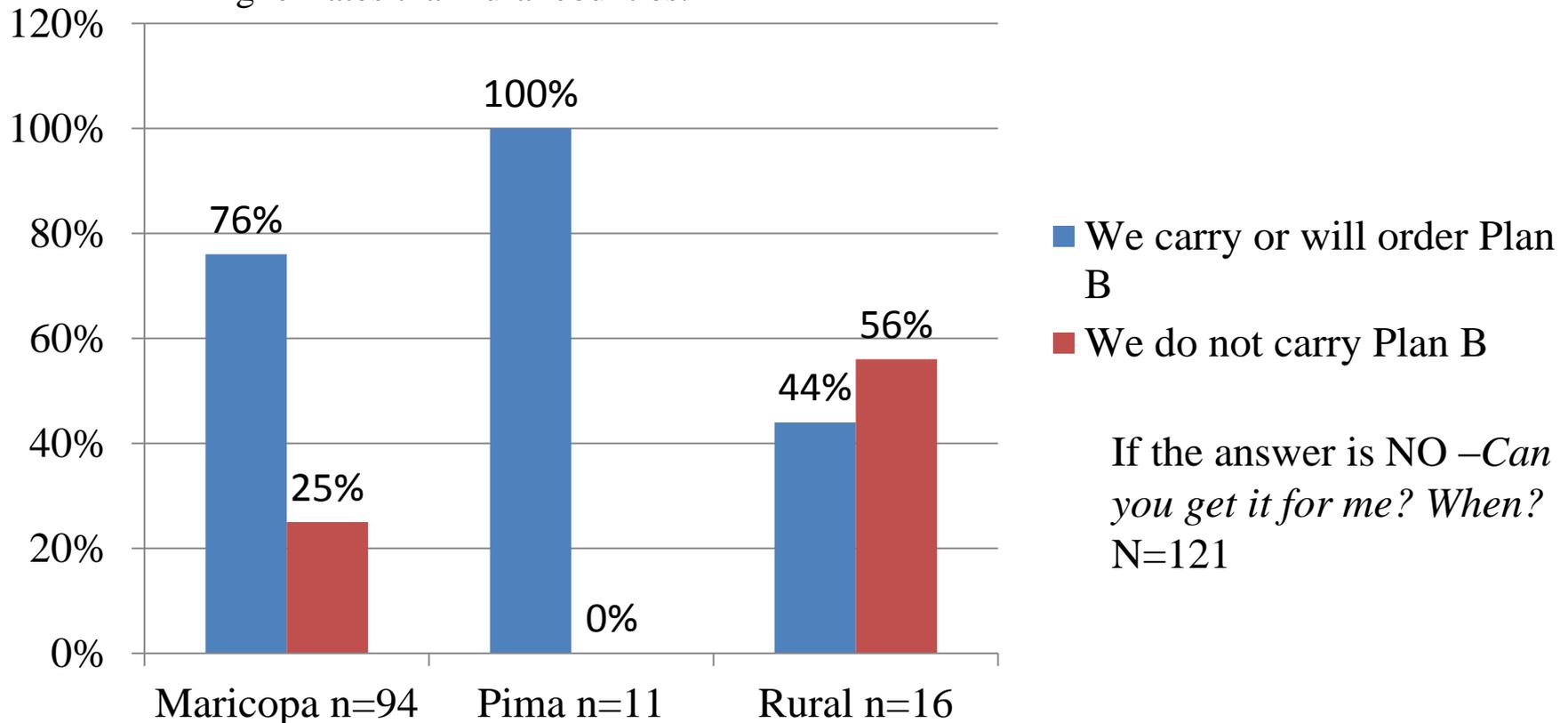


Hi, I need to take Plan B – the morning after pill – and I need it right away. Do you have it? N=680

Responses by Region

When pharmacists who did not have Plan B in stock were questioned further, 100% of pharmacists in Pima County stated that they would order it immediately.

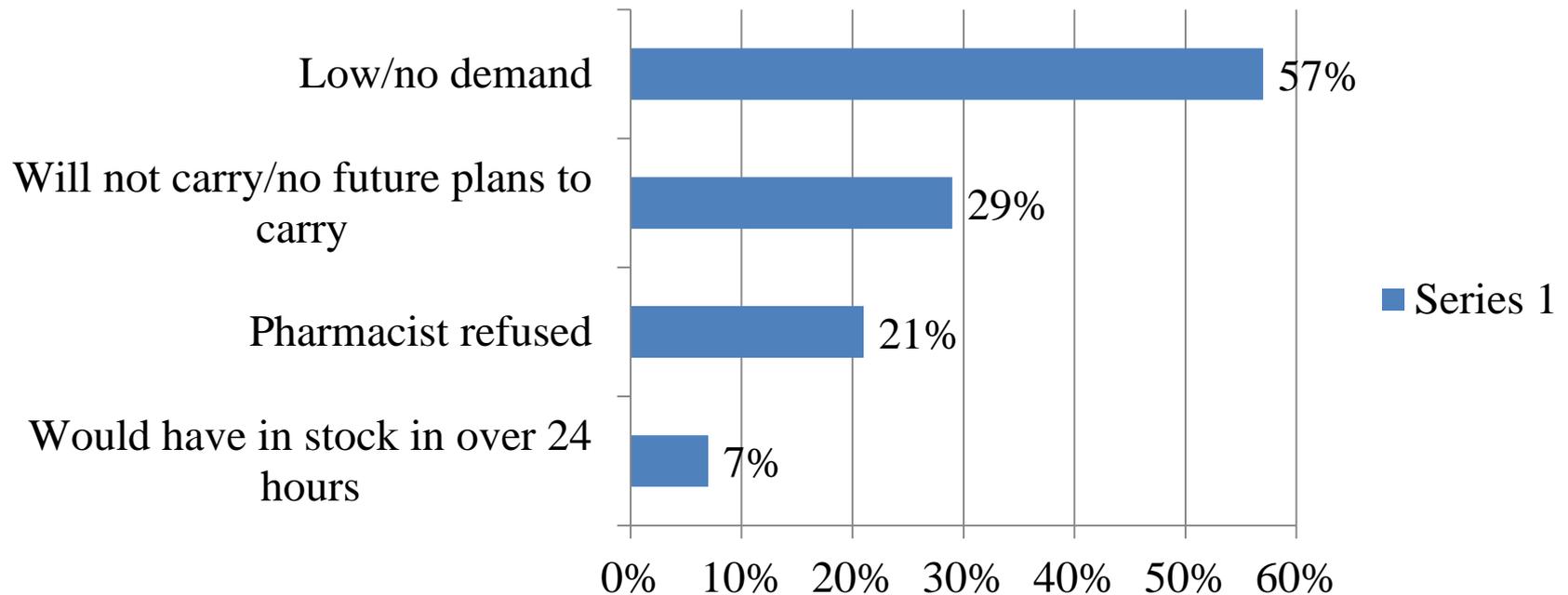
- One quarter of Maricopa county pharmacists said they did not carry Plan B and over one half of rural areas stated they did not carry Plan B
- Pima County pharmacies carried or would order Plan B at statistically significantly higher rates than both Maricopa and rural counties.
- Maricopa County pharmacies carried or would order Plan B at statically significantly higher rates than rural counties.



Maricopa County

Over half of the Maricopa County pharmacists who did not have Plan B in stock cited low or no demand as the reason.

- Over 20% gave the reason of pharmacist refusal
- Nearly 30% had no future plans to carry Plan B

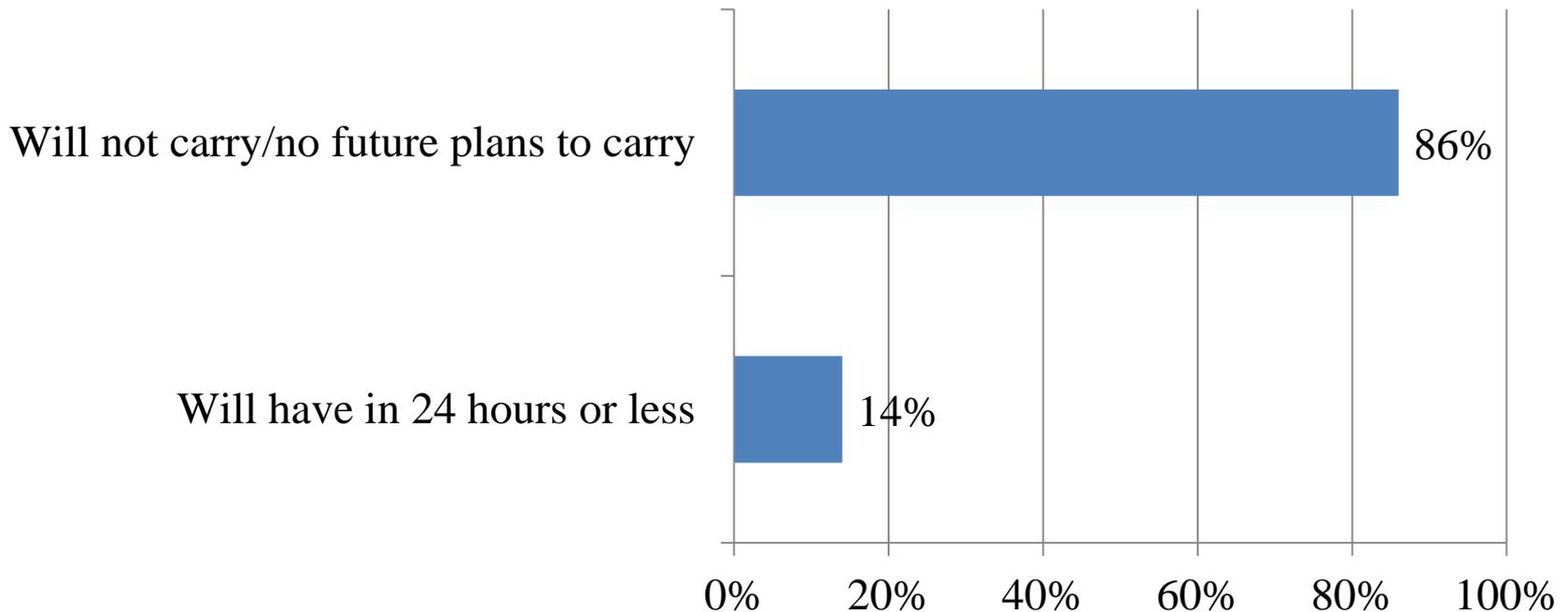


If the answer is we can't get it or it will take more than 24 hours – How come you don't have it? Didn't it go over the counter? N=24

* Pharmacists were permitted to selected more than 1 response, leading percentages to total over 100%

Rural Counties

Nearly 90% of rural pharmacists who did not have Plan B in stock said they will not carry or have no future plans to carry Plan B.

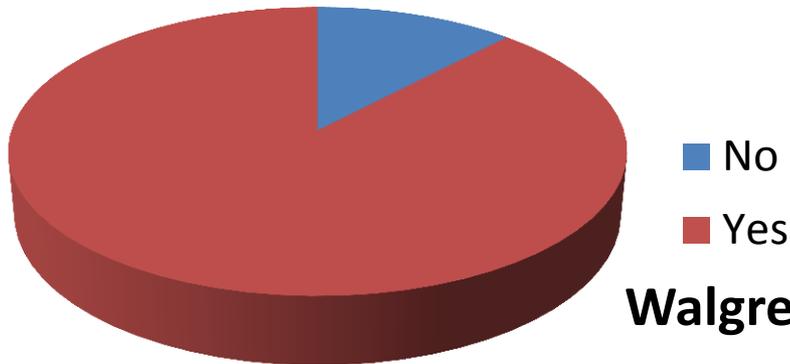


If the answer is we can't get it or it will take more than 12 hours – *How come you don't have it? Didn't it go over the counter?* N=7

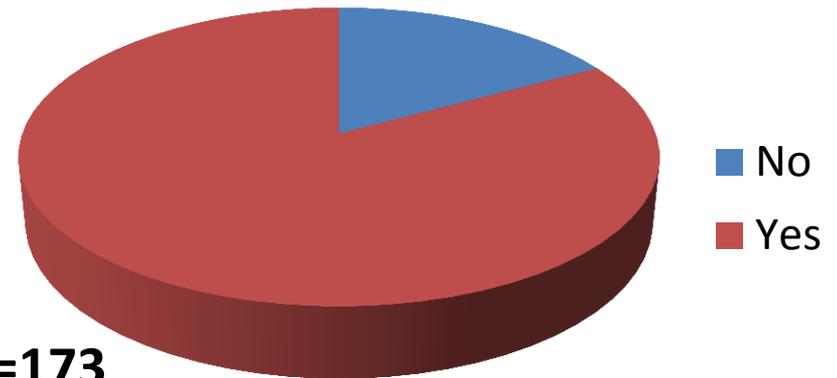
Pharmacy

Over 80% of all pharmacies surveyed had Plan B in stock or were willing to order it immediately.

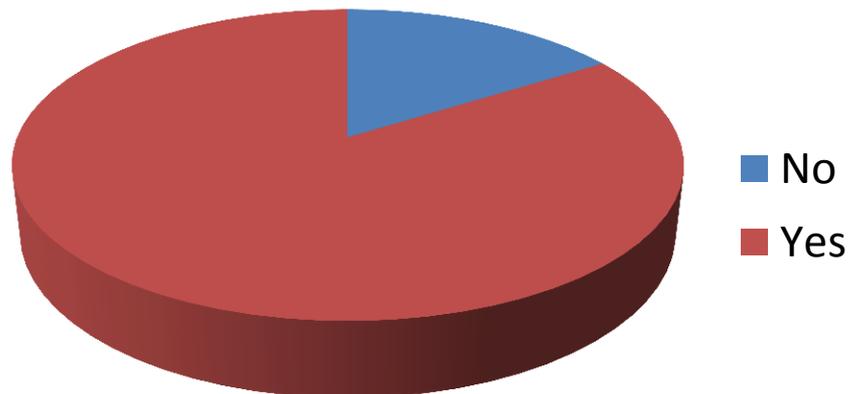
Wal Mart n=34



Safeway n=82



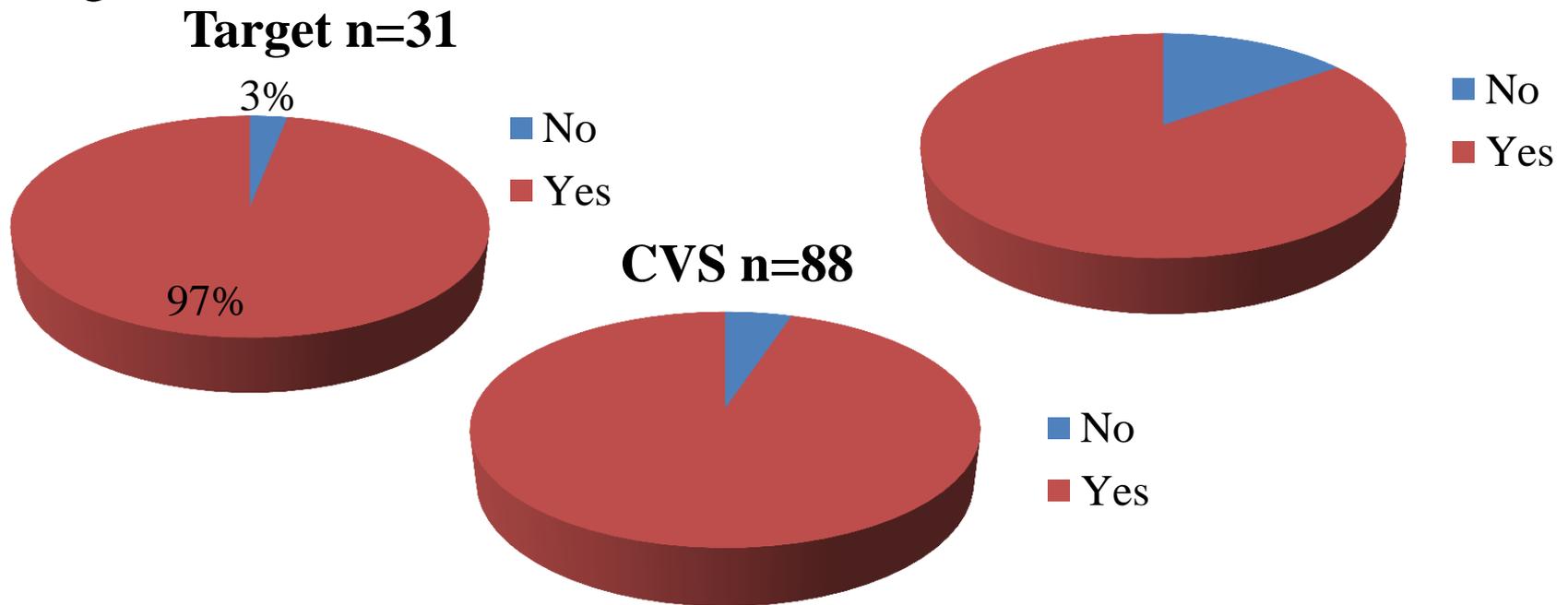
Walgreens n=173



Hi, I need to take Plan B – the morning after pill – and I need it right away. Do you have it?

Pharmacies

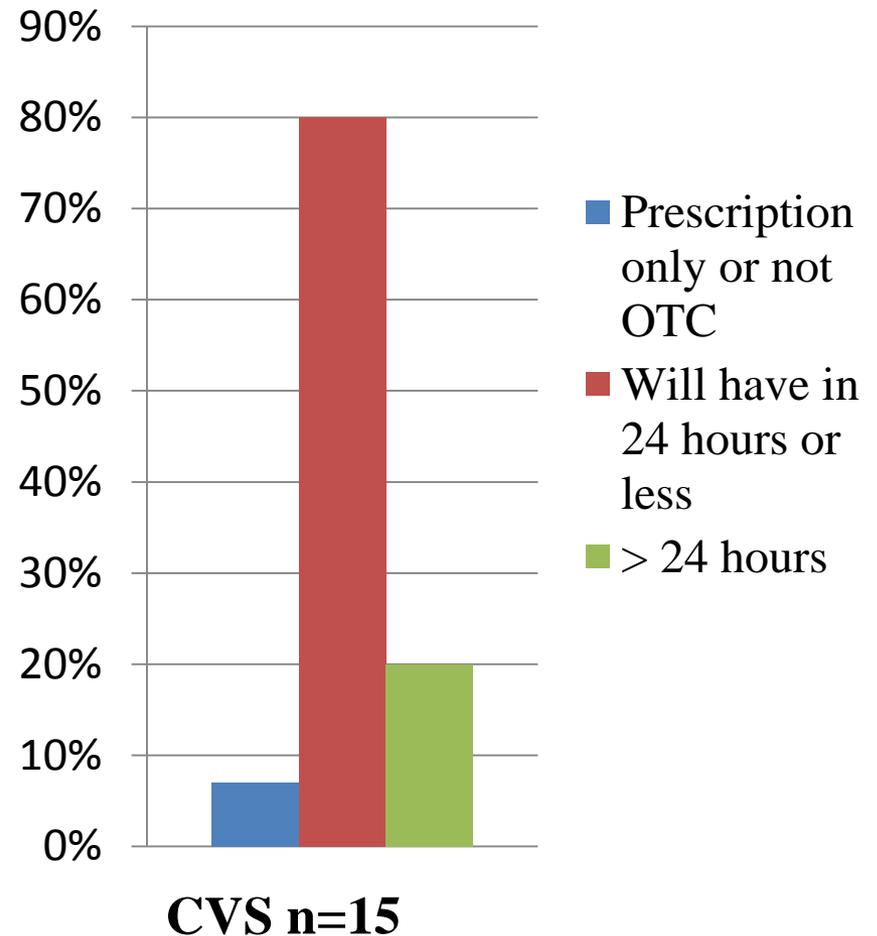
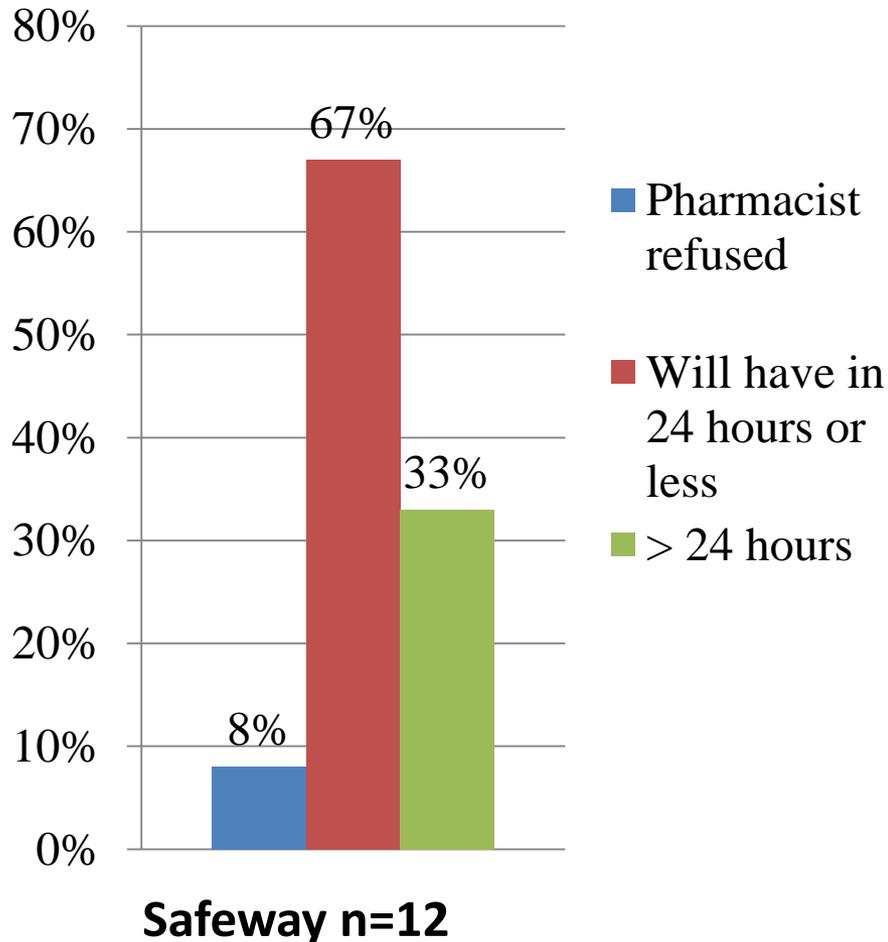
When all pharmacies listed were compared, Target had the best overall in stock rate at 97%. Safeway and CVS pharmacies had the lowest in stock rate with 17% of pharmacies failing to have Plan B in stock. None of these differences were significant.



Hi, I need to take Plan B – the morning after pill – and I need it right away. Do you have it?

Pharmacy

While 80% of CVS pharmacies stated they could have Plan B in stock in less than 24 hours, 8% of Safeway pharmacists informed the caller that the pharmacist could or would refuse to supply customers with Plan B.



If the answer is we can't get it or it will take more than 12 hours – *how come you don't have it? Didn't it go over the counter?* *Pharmacists were permitted to select more than 1 response, leading percentages to total over 100%