

General Risks and Side Effects

Post-Abortion Syndrome (PAS)

PAS is defined as the stress reaction experienced after having an abortion. PAS is a sub-category of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). Symptoms of PAS may include any of the following: guilt, anxiety, numbness, depression, flashbacks, and suicidal thoughts.

Additional Side Effects

A study of American women who had experienced one or more abortions indicated the following reactions were found to be associated with abortion:

- Feelings of sadness or loss: 55.8%
- Fears concerning future pregnancies: 36.9%
- Nightmares: 30%
- Withdrawal from family and friends: 30%
- Need help to deal with the loss: 29%
- Increase in alcohol or drug use: 26.7%
- Difficulty controlling anger: 24%
- Difficulty sleeping: 23%
- Relationship ended with a partner: 19.8%

For more information and resources, visit "Support After Abortion" at supportafterabortion.com

Several studies have shown abortion increases a woman's risk of having a premature delivery in future births. These studies have also shown a link between induced abortion and an increased risk of breast cancer.

Research

1. U.S. Food and Drug Administration – "Mifeprex Medication Guide"
2. HexaHealth.com – "Abortion in the Third Trimester – Why It is a Rare Decision"
3. Lanfranchi, Gentles, and Ring-Cassidy – "Abortion's Impact on Women," 1st ed. Biology and epidemiology confirm the abortion-breast cancer link; pp. 109-142
4. Rue, Coleman, Rue, and Reardon – "Induced Abortion and Traumatic Stress"
5. Babbot – "Post Abortion Stress Syndrome (PASS) – Does It Exist?"
6. Anderson, Field – "Reproductive Choices of Young Women Affecting Future Breast Cancer Risk"
7. MedicalNewsToday – "Miscarriage rates by week: Risks and statistics"



Revised on 8/15/2024
For the most up-to-date information, scan the QR code.

DISCLAIMER: This fact sheet is designed to be an informational tool only. It is not intended to provide medical advice or replace care from a qualified medical practitioner.



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YOUR OPTIONS

ABORTION

The Best Decision is
an Informed Decision

WITHIN 10 WEEKS AFTER LMP*

ABORTION PILL *Not available in NE after 11 weeks
*Not available in IA after 6 weeks

Mifepristone is taken first. Mifepristone blocks progesterone, interrupting pregnancy development and promoting detachment of implanted embryo.

Misoprostol is taken up to 48 hours later. Misoprostol induces contractions to empty the uterus. A follow-up appointment may be scheduled to ensure the abortion is complete.

WARNING: The FDA has approved Mifepristone for use up to 70 days (10 weeks) from LMP. Deviations from the approved regimen increase the risk of harmful complications.

Do not buy Mifepristone over the Internet because you will bypass important safeguards designed to protect your health. Mifepristone has special safety restrictions on how it is distributed to the public. Also, drugs purchased from foreign internet sources are not the FDA approved version and are not subject to FDA manufacturing controls or quality inspections.

Risks and Side Effects

- Some women may require a surgical abortion to complete the process. The percentage of this occurring increases with gestational age.
- Hemorrhaging (failure to stop bleeding), cramping, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, infection.
- Not advised for women with anemia, bleeding disorders, liver or kidney disease, seizure disorder, acute inflammatory bowel disease, who have an IUD, or are unable to return for the next visit.

Fetal Development LMP - 10W

- Heart begins to beat
- Brain, spinal cord, and nerves develop
- Face takes shape with eyes, nose, ears & upper lip
- All limbs form with bones and fingers & toes
- Internal reproductive organs are forming
- Brain connections are forming
- Movement begins

6 – 16 WEEKS 6 DAYS AFTER LMP

SUCTION CURETTAGE *Not available in NE after 12 weeks
*Not available in IA after 6 weeks

- The patient will lie on her back with feet in stirrups and a speculum is inserted to open the vagina.
- The health care provider will use a speculum to view the cervix, and will then inject a numbing medication into the area to feel some pain like strong menstrual cramps during the procedure. The cervix is opened by placing dilators that will open the cervix the exact amount needed.
- When the cervix is open enough, a cannula (long plastic tube) connected to a suction machine is inserted into the uterus to suction out the fetus and placenta.
- The procedure usually takes 10–15 minutes but may require staying in the clinic for a few hours to observe for complications.

Risks and Side Effects

- Cramping, nausea, feeling faint, scarring of uterus lining.
- Less frequent side effects: hemorrhaging, blood clots, damage to cervix, perforation (poking a hole) through the uterus.
- Pelvic inflammatory disease is caused by an untreated STD or bacteria introduced into the uterus. May be asymptomatic or can cause fever, pain, abdominal tenderness, and possible infertility.

Fetal Development 11W - 16W6D

- Profile well defined
- Eyes are open
- Fingertips and toes forming fine friction ridges (touch)
- Fingernails and irises in both eyes form
- External genitalia are identifiable
- Kidneys produce urine and stomach secretes digestive juices

“Since abortion in the later stage can pose more risk to the mother’s life, consulting with an expert before making a decision is highly critical.”

17 – 20 WEEKS 6 DAYS AFTER LMP

DILATION & EVACUATION (D&E) *Not available in NE
*Not available in IA

- Often, 24 hours prior to the procedure, the abortion provider will insert a laminaria or synthetic dilator inside the patient’s cervix.
- Cone-shaped rods, increasing in size, are used to dilate the cervix.
- A cannula is inserted to begin removing tissue away from the lining. Then a curette may be used to scrape out any residual tissue.
- If necessary, forceps are used to remove larger tissue.
- Procedure usually lasts approximately 30 minutes.

Risks and Side Effects

- Nausea, bleeding, cramping, and dizziness may occur for two weeks following the procedure.
- Pelvic inflammatory disease is caused by an untreated STD or bacteria introduced into the uterus. May be asymptomatic or can cause fever, pain, abdominal tenderness, and possible infertility.
- Infection due to remaining tissues in the uterus.
- Although rare, additional risks include: damage to uterine lining or cervix, perforation (poking a hole) through the uterus, blood clots, and sepsis (infections entering blood).

Fetal Development 17W - 20W6D

- Swallowing and sucking
- Joints are developed and fetus turns into kicks and jabs
- Eyebrows and lips fully forming
- Senses are developing such as smell, vision, touch/pain, taste, and hearing (including hearing your voice)
- You begin to feel movement

“80% of all miscarriages happen in the first trimester of pregnancy.”
*** last menstrual period**