

Comparison of Early Abortion Options

Medical Abortion with Mifepristone and Misoprostol Aspiration Abortion

How far along in the pregnancy can I be?

Up to 7 weeks (49 days) from the first day of your last menstrual period (LMP)

6 to 13 weeks from the first day of your last menstrual period.

Is it safe?

Both medications have been used safely since 1988 in France, and 2000 in the U.S. It has been in use in over 60 countries around the world before approved in Canada. Medical abortion is at least 10 times safer than continuing a pregnancy.

Aspiration abortion has been done safely for over 30 years. There are few complications in the first 13 weeks and the procedure is at least 10 times safer than continuing a pregnancy.

What will happen?

The abortion takes place at home.

The abortion takes place in the clinic.

In the clinic you will swallow a pill, mifepristone. Most women feel fine after taking it.

During the procedure, you will have your legs in stirrups on the procedure table for 5 to 10 minutes.

At home 24-48 hours later, you will take the misoprostal pills. The abortion usually starts 1-4 hours after you take the misoprostol. You will have heavy bleeding and cramps for a few hours.

The doctor will gently dilate your cervix and insert a curette into your uterus. The aspirator will be turned on for a couple of minutes to remove the pregnancy.

You will need to return to the clinic for follow-up to confirm your pregnancy has ended or go to a lab for a test 7-14 days later.

You are not required to return to the clinic for follow-up unless you have concerns or are experiencing complications.

How painful is it?

Cramps can range from mild to very strong off and on during the abortion. Pain medication can help.

Cramps can range from mild to very strong off and on during the procedure. You will be given a local anaesthetic and offered IV sedation to help control pain.

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Aspiration Abortion

How much will I bleed?

Heavy bleeding with clots, is common during the abortion. After that, lighter bleeding may continue off and on for 1-2 weeks or more.

Most women have light bleeding for 1-7 days. Bleeding may continue off and on for a few more weeks.

Can the abortion fail?

Mifegymiso works 98-99% of the time. If it fails, you must have an aspiration procedure as the medications can damage the embryo.

It works 99% of the time. If it fails, you may have a repeat aspiration or choose to continue your pregnancy.

Can I still have children afterwards?

YES. Neither type of abortion lowers your chances of getting and staying pregnant in the future.

What are the pros and cons?

PROS

1. You won't have shots, anesthesia or instruments in your body.
2. It may feel more natural, like a miscarriage.
3. It can be done earlier in the pregnancy than an aspiration abortion.
4. Being at home instead of in a clinic is more private.
5. You can choose to have someone with you, or you can be alone.

CONS

1. It takes 1-2 days to complete the abortion.
2. Bleeding can be very heavy and may last longer than with an aspiration abortion.
3. Cramps can be severe and last longer than with an aspiration abortion.
4. It cannot be done as late in pregnancy as an aspiration abortion.

PROS

1. It is over in a few minutes.
2. It works 99% of the time.
3. You have less bleeding than you would with a medication abortion.
4. Medical staff are with you during the abortion.
5. It can be done later in the pregnancy than a medication abortion.

CONS

1. A physician inserts instruments inside the uterus.
2. Anesthetics and pain medicines can cause side effects.
3. You cannot have a support person with you in the procedure or recovery room.
4. It cannot be done as early in pregnancy as a medication abortion.