

# MEDICAL ABORTION ("ABORTION PILL")

## What is the "abortion pill"?

The abortion pill is a combination of medications that women can use to end an early pregnancy. There are two medications that must be taken. The first medication, blocks a hormone that a pregnancy would need to continue. The second medication is taken 24-48 hours later at home and causes the uterus to empty itself, similar to an early miscarriage.

It can be used under the following circumstances:

- It is taken within the first 10 weeks after the first day of your last menstrual period
- If you have an IUD it is to be removed prior to taking the pills.
- You must not be experiencing a fever or pelvic pain
- You have access to emergency care for the next two weeks (for example you should not take the abortion pill if you are travelling to a remote location or outside of the country)
- You do not have uncontrolled asthma

## What pill is available and how much does it cost?

The pill that is available in Canada is Mifegymiso® and it is **free** for women in Ontario provided that they show the pharmacy a **valid Ontario Health Card**. If you do not have an Ontario Health card, the medication costs \$300-450.

## How effective is the abortion pill?

The abortion pill is 95-98% effective in causing an abortion in early pregnancies. If it is not effective, you can take further medication or an appointment at the hospital for an abortion.

## Do I need a prescription for the abortion pill?

A doctor or nurse practitioner would have to write a prescription for you in order to get the abortion pill. However, health care providers have to undertake special training before being able to prescribe and therefore only certain clinics would have trained staff that are able to offer a prescription for the medication.

## What are the steps to taking the abortion pill?

Initially you would have to make an appointment with a physician or nurse practitioner to go through your options. If you choose to use the abortion pill, you will have undergo an ultrasound to confirm the dates of your pregnancy and exclude a pregnancy outside of the uterus. You also will need bloodwork.

A physician or nurse practitioner would then give you a prescription for the abortion pill which you could fill at a local pharmacy.

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The second medication (four pills) needs to be taken 24-48 hours after the first pill. Most women usually take the second medication in the comfort of their own home. It is recommended you rest for three hours after taking the second dose. **It is also strongly recommended that you have a support person with you during the process.**

### **What should I expect after taking the abortion pill?**

Most women will start bleeding within a few hours of taking the second medication. Bleeding will be heavier than a period and there may be clots. Lighter bleeding can last for up to two weeks after taking the medication.

Cramping and pain (usually worse than a period) usually occurs within a few hours of taking the second medication and usually peaks when the uterus is emptying. Your healthcare provider will discuss medications that you can take for the pain.

Common side effects include: nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, headache, and chills and a fever. If the fever and chills last more than 24 hours, you are advised to seek emergency care.

### **Will I need to make a follow up appointment?**

Patients can follow up in the form of ultrasound OR they can have bloodwork only and be contacted regarding need for further assessment.

### **When would I seek emergency care?**

If you have any signs or symptoms of an infection, you should seek emergency care. These may include:

- Fever/chills that last over 24 hours after taking the second medication
- Abdominal or pelvic pain
- Feeling weak or having flu like symptoms
- Foul smelling vaginal discharge
- Bleeding through two pads in an hour for more than two-hours straight
- Dizziness, racing heart beat

### **When can I start birth control?**

You can start the birth control pill the same day you take the second medication. It will take two weeks before it is effective.

You can have an IUD inserted at your follow-up appointment.

### **Sexually Transmitted Infection (STI) Protection**

The abortion pill does not protect against STIs. Use a condom, dental dam, latex glove for every act of sexual intercourse.

**For more information, please contact  
The Clinic at 519-663-5317**

**\*The Clinic does not offer or prescribe the “abortion pill”\***  
**Please contact the Pregnancy Options Clinic at 519-685-8204 to make an  
appointment**

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