

Your medical abortion treatment

Stage 1:

At your initial appointment with Marie Stopes International you will have a consultation with a nurse or a doctor who will check your medical history and perform an ultrasound scan. They will explain how the medical abortion pills work and any side effects you might expect from the pills. If you choose this method you will be given the first pill which you can take at the centre. This appointment will take about an hour and then you are free to leave. You can eat before your appointment unless you were not sure if you were having a medical or surgical method.

Stage 2:

You will need to come back to the Marie Stopes Centre between 6-48 hours later where you will be given a further set of pills to take. You will be able to go home a short while after taking the pills, but you are not allowed to drive yourself at this stage. It is best to ask a friend or partner to accompany you. Most women prefer to be in the privacy of their own home but it is advisable to have someone with you. You will experience some vaginal and lower abdominal cramping pains usually within a few hours of taking the pills (sometimes within an hour), which can range from mild to severe and you will pass some pregnancy tissue. This is usually more than a typical menstrual period but severe cramping does not usually last longer than 24 hours. In some cases this process may take a little longer to happen.

Aftercare:

We have a 24 hour advice and aftercare helpline if you need to contact us. We will give you a pregnancy test to take home with you to confirm that the pregnancy has been passed. Wait for at least three weeks after the second treatment before taking the test as some pregnancy hormone can be present for up to three weeks, which can give a false positive result. If the test is positive or you are at all worried that you may still be pregnant you can call our helpline for advice or come back to the centre.

Aftercare and advice helpline: 0845 122 1441 (24 hrs)



medical abortion

To arrange an appointment or for further information please call:

0845 300 8090 (24 hours)

Or visit:

www.mariestopes.org.uk

Introduction

As an alternative to surgical abortion, Marie Stopes International also offers women the option of medical abortion for pregnancies under 9 weeks.

Medical abortion, also known as the abortion pill is a method of terminating a pregnancy using medication (pills) instead of a surgical procedure. It causes a process similar to a miscarriage. Success rates are up to 98% (meaning that it may fail in around 2 in 100 cases) in the first 9 weeks of pregnancy and it has been recommended as the most effective and safest method of terminating early stage pregnancies.*

With a medical abortion there is no surgery involved and no anaesthetic or injection is required. Whilst a surgical abortion is still the preferred choice for some women, others prefer a non-surgical option and find a medical treatment is non-invasive, convenient and more private. Ultimately the method you choose is your personal choice.

Medical abortion has been widely used by millions of women in over 30 countries over the last 20 years. Marie Stopes International has been providing medical abortion services in the UK since 1996.

* The Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists UK "Guidelines for the Care of Women Requesting Induced Abortion" (2004).

Medical Abortion. An alternative to a surgical procedure.

Comparison of medical & surgical abortion

Medical abortion	Surgical abortion
Success rate up to 98%	Success rate of over 99%
Used up to 9 weeks of pregnancy	Surgical abortion up to 24 weeks of pregnancy
No surgical procedure required (except in cases where surgical procedure becomes necessary)	Gentle suction removes the pregnancy vaginally
No anaesthetic required (except in cases where surgical procedure becomes necessary)	Usually a choice of anaesthetic – local, conscious sedation or general anaesthetic
The medication causes a process similar to a miscarriage	A doctor or gynaecologist performs the procedure
Abortion usually occurs within 24 hours of the second set of tablets	The procedure normally takes about 5-10 minutes to perform and then there is a recovery period
Two short visits to the centre	Can be completed over one visit to the centre
Oral pain medication can be used such as paracetamol or Ibuprofen	Oral pain medication can be used such as paracetamol or Ibuprofen
The process will occur in the privacy of your own home	The whole procedure takes place at the centre

In addition, medical abortion is suitable for women who have previously had a caesarean section, multiple pregnancies or who have uterine abnormalities. It is also suitable for women who are overweight and some diabetics.

For further information please see our 'Abortion your questions answered' booklet.

To arrange an appointment or for more information visit www.mariestopes.org.uk or call our 24 hour advice line on 0845 300 8090.