

# AN OVERVIEW OF SELF-MANAGED ABORTION

*This document is provided for informational purposes only; it is not legal or medical advice.*

This document summarizes information on how to use abortion pills. For full information see [www.abortionpillinfo.org](http://www.abortionpillinfo.org)

Because self-managed abortion can be criminalized, it is important for the person sharing information to provide it in the third person (avoid saying “you”) and be very clear that it is only information, not advice. If legal assistance is needed, call the if/when/how repro legal helpline at 844.868.2812.

## Why this information is needed

Information about abortion is part of basic sexual health care. Anyone who can get pregnant should have access to information on contraception, safer sex, healthy sexuality and abortion pills.

Abortion pills are effective and safe. Mifepristone plus misoprostol is effective 93-98% of the time if taken in the first 12 weeks of pregnancy. Misoprostol alone is 85-95% effective in the first 12 weeks of pregnancy. Abortion pills are medically very safe, even safer than Viagra or aspirin. They cause a miscarriage, and miscarriage happens spontaneously in 15-20% of all pregnancies.

## Six Precautions (before using abortion pills)

1. A person should confirm they are pregnant by using a urine test, blood test, or ultrasound.
2. A person should be sure they are less than 12 weeks pregnant. They can do this by counting from the first day of their last menstrual period.
3. A person should make a plan and arrange to have someone be with them. An effective plan involves arranging a safe and comfortable space, not planning to work that day, and having anti-nausea medicine (so one doesn't vomit up the pills), ibuprofen (for cramps) and pads. The plan should include understanding what to expect, and what to say in the rare case one has to seek medical treatment.
4. Abortion pills should not be used when a person has a bleeding disorder or a very serious illness. If a person has an IUD, they should have it removed before using the pills.
5. A person should have a reliable way to get to a hospital in two hours or less. Complications are rare but they need to be near medical aid if needed.
6. It is important that the person is choosing abortion of their own free will and is not being coerced.

**For  
More  
Info:**

For information on using abortion pills, including the correct dosage and how to use them, visit [www.AbortionPillInfo.org](http://www.AbortionPillInfo.org)

Video: [bit.ly/UseAbortionPill](https://bit.ly/UseAbortionPill)

Or scan this QR code:



## What to Expect after Using the Pills

- **Misoprostol has side effects.** After the first dose of misoprostol a person will have: Nausea, vomiting, light fever with chills and/or diarrhea can occur. These side effects will pass within one hour.
- Bleeding usually starts within four to five hours after using the pills, but sometimes earlier or later. Cramping precedes the start of bleeding. Ibuprofen and/or a heating pad can be helpful for the pain.
- Bleeding usually continues lightly one to three weeks after the abortion. If the abortion is complete, the bleeding and the cramps diminish.

## Confirming the Person is No Longer Pregnant

If the pills did not work and the pregnancy continues, the person can try to use the medicine again after three days. If an ectopic pregnancy is suspected, the person should get an ultrasound before using the medicines again.

If a person had a successful abortion, the pregnancy symptoms should disappear and they should not feel pregnant.

## After the Abortion

- A person can get pregnant immediately after an abortion. (For info on contraception options, visit Bedsider. [www.bedsider.org](http://www.bedsider.org))
- Expect light bleeding for 1-3 weeks afterwards.
- Confirm the abortion was successful by getting an ultrasound ten days after the abortion, getting a blood test LabCorp or Quest lab (no prescription required) or by taking a urine pregnancy test 3-4 weeks after the abortion. Most people feel a decrease in pregnancy symptoms (nausea, need to urinate, fatigue, breast tenderness) if the abortion was successful.

## Resources

### Self-Managed Abortion: Safe & Supported

[abortionpillinfo.org](http://abortionpillinfo.org) - Instructions on using abortion pills

**Plan C Pills** [plancpills.org](http://plancpills.org) - Information on how to find abortion pills in your state

**I Need an A** [ineedana.com](http://ineedana.com) - Listing of abortion clinics and online abortion resources

**Digital Defense Fund** [digitaldefensefund.org](http://digitaldefensefund.org) - Digital security information for the repro justice community

**Euki App** [eukiapp.org](http://eukiapp.org) - Secure and private free sexual health/menstrual tracking app

**Miscarriage & Abortion Hotline** 1-833-246-2632 (call or text) - Secure hotline staffed by clinicians skilled in miscarriage and abortion care

**Repro Legal Helpline** 1-844-868-2812 - Free legal support from If/When/How

## Important!

If there is a complication, a person can go to a hospital or doctor and say they had a miscarriage. They do not need to say they used abortion pills. They should then be treated for miscarriage. There is no way for the doctor to know the person has taken medicines unless the person discloses this. There is currently no test that can identify abortion pills in urine or blood.

## When Should a Person Seek Medical Care?

Complications are rare (less than 0.4% of cases). Signs of a complication:

- Heavy bleeding that lasts for more than two hours and soaks two maxi sanitary pads per hour, or if a person starts to feel dizzy or light-headed. This is a sign of hemorrhage, and the person must seek immediate medical care
- Infection - Symptoms can include:

Severe pain that does not go away after a few days

Vaginal discharge that smells bad or is an unusual color

Fever of over 100 degrees for more than 24 hours, or a fever of more than 102 degrees.

For more information, please read the FAQs at [www.AbortionPillInfo.org](http://www.AbortionPillInfo.org)

For more information, or to visit any of the links, scan this QR code or visit:



<https://linktr.ee/abortionpillinfo.org>