

Whole Woman's Health of Baltimore
Transforming healthcare one woman at a time
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MEDICAL ABORTION SERVICES INFORMATION

To Our Patients and Their Friends and Family,

At Whole Woman's Health, our emphasis is on the whole woman – your head, your heart and your body. You are the most important person involved in your health care and we encourage your participation. Many of our patients feel alone and afraid-- yet 37% of American women have at least one abortion by the age of 45. We strongly support your ability to decide what's best for you and are here to guide you and provide you with information. We will treat you with excellent medical care and respond to your needs as best we can.

The more you understand, the better you will be able to take care of yourself. Your informed participation in decisions regarding your healthcare is important to us. You probably have many questions regarding your abortion procedure. This packet is designed to address those concerns. Please read the information **carefully** and if you have any questions please ask a staff person at any time or the counselor when you meet with her.

We will try to make your stay with us as comfortable and brief as possible. There is some waiting time between the stages of your medical work up and we advise you to read all the accompanying information while you're waiting. During your visit(s) you will:

1. Complete self medical history forms.
2. Have pre-operative ultrasound and lab work, including a simple blood test and vital signs.
3. Discuss payment options.
4. Meet with a patient educator who will discuss the medications, how to take them and what to expect.
5. Meet with the doctor and take your first medication. At that time you will also receive the misoprostol to take at home. You may also request a prescription for pain medication.

ULTRASOUND AND LAB TESTING

We will perform an ultrasound to determine the length of your pregnancy and to confirm the pregnancy is in the uterus. An ultrasound uses sound waves to see your pelvic structures. It is NOT AN X-RAY and there is no radiation. An ultrasound is done while you lie down and a gel solution is applied to your abdomen. If you are early in the pregnancy we may need to do a vaginal ultrasound. There is little or no discomfort while the ultrasound is being performed.

An ultrasound is considered the most reliable method of determining the length of pregnancy. Although you may have had an ultrasound done elsewhere before coming to our office, we need to perform one here.

In the lab we will check your blood pressure, weight, pulse, and temperature. We will also perform a finger stick for a blood sample. We need to check your blood for iron count and Rh factor. If your blood is found to be Rh negative you will need an injection of Rhogam, at an additional charge, before you leave the office. Rhogam prevents antibodies from being formed in your blood that would cause problems with future pregnancies. If you're Rh negative, it is important to receive the Rhogam injection with every pregnancy.

PAYMENT

We require the entire fee be paid before having the abortion. Payment must be made in either cash, money order, or credit card (MasterCard/Visa/Discover & Debit Cards).

Our fees include 200 mg Mifepristone and 600 mcg Misoprostol. We may also give you a prescription for a pain medication that you can take at home when you insert the Misoprostol. You may have additional fees if the physician or medical staff determines that you need extra medications or testing. These may include, but are not limited to, injectable antibiotics, early detection pregnancy test, urine culture, throat culture, or Rhogam injection.

It is very important that we have your correct telephone number and address. We are very respectful of your privacy and will keep all your information confidential. We will only call you if there is an emergency. There are no additional costs in the rare case that we need to repeat the procedure.

We offer the Depo Provera birth control injection to our patients after the abortion is finished. This method of birth control lasts for 3 months and costs \$65. Please let a staff person know if you are interested.

If your abortion procedure is not performed due to patient request or physician advice, you will be responsible for payment of services rendered such as the pregnancy test, ultrasound, and lab tests. All other fees will be refunded.

COUNSELING

You will meet with a counselor who will go over the abortion procedure in detail and review how to use the medications. This is a good opportunity to talk about how you are doing emotionally with your pregnancy and abortion decision. The counselor will discuss birth control options and, if you choose, will provide you with a method to use after your abortion. She will also review your aftercare instructions.

Our counselors review the risks and benefits and sign forms with you consenting to the abortion. Legally we must obtain your written consent for the abortion. **An abortion will not be performed on any woman who does not want one, regardless of age.**

PROCEDURE

After your ultrasound, labwork and counseling, you will meet with the doctor, who will review your medical history and give you the medications. The first medication, Mifeprex, is taken orally after your consultation with the doctor. Mifeprex stops the production of pregnancy hormone and causes the pregnancy to detach from the uterine wall. Some women report a little nausea after taking Mifeprex, but most women don't report any side effects at all.

You can take the four tablets of Misoprostol 6-48 hours after taking the Mifeprex, but we recommend taking the Misoprostol during normal business hours (8am-5pm) so we are immediately available if you have any questions or concerns. The 4 Misoprostol tablets should be placed inside your cheek (like a hard candy) and kept there until they are mostly gone (if a small amount of the tablets remain, you may swallow them). Misoprostol will cause your uterus to contract and your cervix to open slightly, allowing your body to expel the pregnancy, and can be accompanied by mild to intense cramping and heavy bleeding. You don't have to return to the office during the insertion, but we do ask that you are at home or somewhere comfortable within an hour of emergency medical care.

Very strong cramping is a normal part of the process and cramping typically starts about one to four hours after insertion. Heavy bleeding and passing clots is also very normal. You may pass small or large clots (up to the size of a quarter dollar or lemon) within the first few hours.

It will generally take several hours for the abortion to occur. Most women complete the abortion (pass the pregnancy) within 24 hours. However, spotting or a light period could last for several days or weeks. And *mild* cramping can be present for 2-7 days after an abortion.

REQUIREMENTS

Because of the risk of hemorrhage, on the day that you take the misoprostol pills, you must:

- Be at home or in the home of someone who knows what is happening,
- Have a phone,
- Be within one hour of an emergency room,
- Have no other obligations including small children to care for,
- Have with you, or “on call,” a support person who knows what is happening and who has a car.

MANAGING SIDE EFFECTS

We can give you a prescription for pain medication when you receive the Mifeprex. Please fill this prescription before you insert the misoprostol. In order to prevent intense cramping take the pain medication prescribed about 30 minutes before inserting the Misoprostol. After that you can take it as directed, as needed. A heating pad or hot water bottle will also help alleviate pain from cramping. Other non-aspirin pain relievers can also be used such as ibuprofen and Tylenol.

Drink plenty of fluids and eat lightly the day before and on the day you insert the misoprostol pills. Misoprostol may cause nausea, vomiting, and diarrhea, and fever, so you need fluids. Spicy or fried foods worsen the distress. If the vomiting and diarrhea are severe, call Whole Woman’s Health.