

Planned Parenthood of Central North Carolina, Inc. ~ Toll Free 1-866-942-7762

Chapel Hill Health Center
1765 Dobbins Drive
Chapel Hill, NC 27514

Durham Health Center
105 Newsom Street, Suite 101
Durham, NC 27704

Fayetteville Health Center
4551 Yadkin Road
Fayetteville, NC 28303

INSTRUCTIONS FOR AFTER YOUR SURGICAL ABORTION PROCEDURE

1. Take any antibiotics or other medicines that have been given or prescribed to you during your visit, as instructed.
2. It is OK to use tampons after an abortion; however, it is easier to monitor your bleeding if you use sanitary napkins. We recommend that you not put anything else in your vagina for a week: no douching, no sexual intercourse, no suppositories, etc.
3. If you suspect you have a fever, take your temperature. If it is higher than 101°F, please call the health center.
4. You can return to your normal activities as soon as you feel comfortable doing so. It is OK to take a bath or go swimming. You may want to avoid heavy lifting or vigorous exercise for up to two weeks.
5. If you plan to use a hormonal birth control method, such as pills, the patch, or the ring, we recommend that you start the first Sunday after your abortion. (Remember that you should use a back-up method for the first week after starting a hormonal birth control method.) You can get pregnant almost right away after an abortion; however, your period should return within 4-8 weeks. (If you start Depo-Provera® on the day of your procedure, you may not have your period for 4-8 weeks, or at all.) The pregnancy hormone stays in your body for several weeks after the abortion, which means if you take a pregnancy test during this time it can still show a positive result even though you are no longer pregnant.
6. A follow-up visit is generally not required after a surgical abortion; however, we offer an optional check-up, including a birth control consultation, for \$30 if you return within one month of the date of your procedure. Of course, if you have any problems following your abortion procedure, you should contact us immediately for necessary follow-up care. We offer walk-in services or visit by appointment at our Chapel Hill and Durham health centers.

It is normal to experience the following:

- light to moderate bleeding lasting a few days to several weeks after your procedure. The bleeding may stop and re-start or may vary significantly from day to day. Any pattern is normal provided you are not bleeding too heavily.
- passage of some small blood clots.
- uterine cramping similar to menstrual cramps. You can take ibuprofen (Motrin® or Advil®) or acetaminophen (Tylenol®) to relieve cramps; do not use aspirin because it can increase bleeding.
- continued symptoms of pregnancy (breast tenderness, nausea, frequent urination) for a few days after the procedure. These should subside within a week.
- emotional changes as a result of the hormonal fluctuations in your body.

Most patients who have an abortion will not experience any problems or complications. Only about 2 or 3 out of every 100 women who have an abortion will have a complication, and most complications occur within 48 hours after an abortion.

It is rare to have a complication after 7 days.

It is NOT normal to experience the following:

- heavy bleeding: soaking two or more pads an hour for two or more hours in a row.
- passage of blood clots that are larger than the size of a quarter, or passage of many small blood clots.
- strong abdominal pain or uterine cramps that are as severe or intense as they were during the procedure and that are not relieved by medication.
- fever of 101°F or higher.
- unpleasant smelling vaginal discharge or drainage.
- signs of a continuing pregnancy.

**IF YOU ARE HAVING ANY OF THESE SYMPTOMS,
PLEASE CALL THE HEALTH CENTER (866) 942-7762.**