

USING THE ABORTION PILL

Planned Parenthood Northern California 1-925-676-0300

What is the abortion pill and how do I take it?

“Abortion pill” is the popular name for using 2 medicines to end a pregnancy – mifepristone and misoprostol. Mifepristone is the first pill you will take and starts the abortion process. Pregnancy needs a hormone called progesterone to grow normally. Mifepristone blocks your body’s own progesterone.

The second medicine, misoprostol, opens the cervix and makes the uterus contract. This empties the uterus and completes the process. The whole process is also called medication abortion.

There are a few different ways to take these medicines. We will talk to you about your choices.

Before you have an abortion, you need to know the most common benefits, risks, side effects, and other choices you have. We are happy to answer any questions you have.

What are the benefits of the abortion pill?

It is a safe and effective way to end a pregnancy.

How well does the abortion pill work?

It depends how far along you are in the pregnancy. Some women need to take an extra dose of misoprostol.

8 weeks or less	About 98 out of 100 times
From 8 to 9 weeks	About 96 out of 100 times
From 9 to 10 weeks	About 91 to 93 out of 100 times

What are the risks of the abortion pill?

Using the abortion pill is very safe. But, there are risks with any medical procedure.

Risks of the abortion pill are

- The pregnancy doesn’t end — Sometimes the medicines do not end the pregnancy. If this happens, you can take more medicine or have a suction procedure to complete the abortion.
- Incomplete abortion — This means some of the pregnancy may be left inside the uterus. This may lead to heavy bleeding, infection, or both. If this happens, you may need a suction procedure, other tests or treatments.
- Blood clots in the uterus — Clots may cause cramping and belly pain. If this happens, you may need a suction procedure.
- Bleeding too much or too long — This may require treatment with medicine, a suction procedure, or a blood transfusion.
- Infection of the uterus — Most infections can be treated with medicines. But, there is a small chance that you may need a suction procedure. You may have to go to the hospital, or even have other surgery to treat the infection.
- Allergic reaction — Some women are allergic to the medicines that are used.
- Death — Death from medication abortion is very rare. The risk of death from childbirth is much greater.

What are the side effects of the abortion pill?

Side effects usually do not last long. They usually need little or no treatment.

- Cramping is expected — It will be the worst soon after you take the misoprostol. Milder cramps may last a day or 2 after that.
- Bleeding is expected — It will be heaviest soon after you take the misoprostol. You may bleed or spot for 4 to 6 weeks after the abortion.
- Fever — Having a temperature of 99-100°F is okay.
- Other — It is common to have chills, diarrhea, nausea, vomiting, headache, dizziness, back pain, and tiredness.

Besides taking the abortion pill, what other choices do I have?

If you are pregnant, you have 3 options to think about — abortion, adoption, and parenting.

There are 2 ways to have an abortion, the abortion pill and in-clinic abortion.

We can talk about any of these options with you, and help you with whatever you decide to do.

What else do I need to know?

After you take the abortion pill, you must make sure the medicines worked. This can be done by having an ultrasound at the clinic or by a blood test at the clinic or lab. We will tell you when and where to do this.

Misoprostol can cause serious birth defects if the pregnancy continues.

Having a wide range of feelings is normal. Most women feel relieved and do not regret their decision. Others may feel sadness, guilt, or regret after an abortion, just as they may after having a baby. If your mood keeps you from doing the things you usually do each day, call us. We can help or send you to someone who can.

We will also tell you other reasons to contact us.

No promise can be made about the outcome of your abortion. In the unlikely event that you need emergency medical care that cannot be provided at Planned Parenthood, you will be responsible for paying for it. This is the case even if Planned Parenthood sends you to another doctor or hospital because of a problem.

Your health is important to us. If you have any questions or concerns please call us. We are happy to help you.

Signature of Patient (and person authorized to sign for patient when required)

Date

Relationship to Patient: self parent legal guardian other _____

I witness that the patient received this information, said it was read and understood, and there was an opportunity to ask questions.

Signature of Witness

Date