

## Medical Abortion Take Home Instructions

### How To Prepare

- **Day 1:** Take the mifepristone (swallow normally). Call the clinic if you throw up within 15 minutes of taking it.
  - **Day 2:** Insert 4 misoprostol tablets as directed by your doctor 24-48 hours after taking the mifepristone.
  - You may choose to take pain medications 30 minutes before taking the misoprostol tablets.
    - Buccal: Rinse your mouth out with water. Place 2 misoprostol tablets between your gum and cheek on each side (4 tablets total). Let the tablets dissolve. After 30 min, swallow the tablet parts that are left with a sip of water. Do not eat, drink, or chew gum while the tablets are dissolving.
- OR**
- Vaginal: Moisten the 4 tablets with a little bit of water and use your finger to insert them as high up into the vagina as possible.
  - If you are further than 63 days (9 weeks) of pregnancy when taking the pills, insert the second set of 4 misoprostol tablets 4 hours after you take the first set of 4 pills.
  - Because the medical abortion medications will cause you to have bleeding and cramping (and possibly nausea or diarrhea), you may want to arrange for the following:
    - Time off from work
    - Child care for the day
    - A support person
    - Heating pad or hot water bottle
    - Fluids and light foods (water, ginger ale, broth, jell-o, crackers, etc.)
    - Menstrual/period pads

### What To Expect

#### *Bleeding*

Most people will have bleeding that starts within 1-4 hours of taking the misoprostol. You should expect bleeding that is heavier than your normal period. You may pass blood clots (some clots may even be the size of lemons or oranges). The bleeding should be heaviest during the first several hours and should then decrease once the pregnancy passes. It is normal to have vaginal bleeding on and off for up to 3-4 weeks after taking the medication. There is a very small risk of excessive bleeding, which may require you to have a surgical abortion (D&C) or receive other medical treatment. If you do not have any bleeding (or only light spotting) within 24 hours of taking the misoprostol, take the second set of misoprostol pills if under 63 days. If over 63 days and you already took both sets of pills and still are not bleeding, please call us.

#### *Cramping*

It is normal to have cramping with this type of abortion. More severe lower abdominal cramping may last for several hours when the pregnancy tissue is passing out of the body. After the pregnancy passes, the cramping should decrease. Take pain medications such as ibuprofen or acetaminophen and use a heating pad or hot water bottle as needed.

#### *Pregnancy Tissue*

You may pass the pregnancy tissue at an unexpected time or place, however most will pass the pregnancy in the first 12-24 hours after taking the misoprostol (second medication). Most pregnancies less than 9 weeks will not be visible (a 7 week embryo is smaller than a grain of rice). You may see a blood clot or a small white clump of tissue.

#### *Other Side Effects*

Fatigue, nausea, stomach upset, and diarrhea are common. These symptoms should go away within a few days.

#### *Menstrual Cycle (Periods)*

After the initial bleeding of the abortion, you may continue to have light bleeding or spotting for several weeks. Your first period may be lighter or heavier than usual. Your periods may be irregular for the first few months after the abortion. You should carry sanitary products (pads, panty liners, or tampons) with you until your periods return to normal.

### *Contraception (Birth Control)*

Most people are able to become pregnant again very quickly after abortion, usually before they have had their next menstrual period. You should start your birth control method the day after your medical abortion (or as directed by your doctor).

If you have sex without a reliable birth control method (you haven't started a method, didn't use a condom, the condom broke, etc.) you should take emergency contraception and call us. One type of emergency birth control pill, Plan B (or Next Choice) is available by asking a pharmacist at a drug store. Other types of emergency birth control need a prescription. Please call us anytime if you need birth control.

### *Feelings*

People experience a variety of emotions when they are pregnant and when they have an abortion. The most common feeling after abortion is relief. However, some people may experience happiness or sadness. Some of these feelings may be stronger because of the hormonal changes that happen with pregnancy and abortion. If you are feeling consistently sad or distressed, please contact us or your referring doctor.

Confidential telephone counseling is available to people who have had an abortion. These counseling services are not affiliated with Queens Medical Center, Kapi'olani Medical Center or your doctor. Two free telephone counseling services are:

- All-Options Talkline: 1-888-493-0092
- Connect & Breathe: 1-866-647-1764

Or you can text

- Exhale: 617-749-2948

Some people do not feel any symptoms after the first pill (mifepristone), even though the abortion process has already started. Some pregnancies will end after taking mifepristone, but it works best and is safest when taken in combination with the misoprostol as described above. Taking mifepristone alone without the misoprostol may put you at risk of very heavy vaginal bleeding. It is very important to take both mifepristone and misoprostol as described above, as this is the safest way to end your pregnancy.

If you have any doubts or uncertainty about proceeding with the abortion process, it is best to wait before taking either pill. You can reach out to us any time to review your options. You still have the option to have an abortion even if you are past 11 weeks (77 days). If you took mifepristone alone and are having any doubts or concerns, please call us at any time to talk through the next steps. If you experience heavy vaginal bleeding, soaking through more than 2 pads per hour for 2 hours, please go to the emergency room right away.

### Things to Avoid

- Avoid aspirin for the next 2 weeks because this may increase your bleeding and worsen stomach upset.
- You may use any sanitary products that you prefer (tampons, pads, or menstrual cups)
- You may resume your regular activities (work, school, etc.) when you feel ready
- You may resume sexual activity when you feel ready

### Follow-Up

- You must confirm that the pregnancy has passed. We will schedule a follow up telemedicine visit 1-2 weeks after you have taken the pills to check in. We may schedule you for an in-person visit after that call depending on your symptoms.
- **4 weeks after you have taken the misoprostol, take a urine pregnancy test.**
  - If it is positive, call our clinic for further instructions.
  - If it is negative, it confirms that you have passed the pregnancy.

### Contact Us

- Contact us if you have any of the following:
- You vomit within the first 15 minutes after taking the mifepristone.
- You have a fever higher than 100.4 F occurring greater than 24 hours after taking the misoprostol or lasting more than 4 hours.

One week after taking misoprostol, you have any of the following:

- You have not had cramping and bleeding heavier than a period.
- Your bleeding is not getting lighter.
- You do not feel that you passed the pregnancy.
- You do not feel that your pregnancy symptoms (such as nausea and breast tenderness) are resolving.

At any time, you have any of the following:

- An increase in pain/cramps or bleeding more than 24 hours after taking misoprostol.
  - Severe pain that is uncontrolled with medications, rest, and heating pads.
  - Enough bleeding to soak 2 maxi/full-sized pads per hour for more than 2 hours in a row.
  - Passing blood clots larger than a lemon for more than 2 hours.
  - Dizziness or vomiting lasting more than 2 hours.
  - Weakness, nausea or diarrhea lasting for more than 24 hours.
  - Symptoms of an allergic reaction.
- If you are having an emergency, please go to an emergency room.
  - **To contact us, please call the office during business hours Monday-Friday:**
    - Queens Complex Family Planning Clinic POB 1 **Phone: (808) 686-4690**
  - **After business hours, and on weekends and holidays**, call Physicians Exchange at **808-524-2575**. **Please let the operator know your doctor is Dr.**
  - For more information: <https://hawaiifamilyplanning.org> or refer to the Mifepristone Medication Guide that you received with the medications.