

Information for Patients

Medical Termination of Pregnancy from 70 days (10 weeks gestation) (up to 17 weeks and 6 days)

Coming to a decision to terminate a pregnancy is never easy. People often hold strong views for or against termination but when it becomes a personal decision it may be more difficult. Even if termination seems the best solution you may have very conflicting feelings. You may find that some painful thoughts, which you did not expect, arise after the termination for you and your partner.

Although many women do not feel the need to do so, it may help to talk through these feelings with supportive family or friends or with your GP. Alternatively, Pregnancy Choices (0845 2300 123) can offer objective support and counselling at any stage throughout your care.

This is a written copy of information for you to keep about the drugs you will be given to induce the abortion. Please keep it carefully. We will of course be happy to answer any questions you may have.

How does the medication work?

You will be given two different drugs that work together to cause a miscarriage. Mifepristone works by blocking the action of progesterone, a hormone needed in pregnancy. It is used in combination with another type of hormone, misoprostol, which is administered vaginally two days later.

Is it safe?

Many women world wide have used this treatment. It has proved to have a very good safety record. However every form of medical treatment has some risk or side effect. With this treatment, the main risks, although small, are excessive vaginal bleeding or infection. These are usually treated easily.

If you have had any serious medical problems, please discuss these with the doctor or nurse to ensure that the treatment is suitable for you.

How will I take the tablets?

At an agreed time and date, you will be asked to attend the Cley Gynaecology Ward on Level 3 at the Norfolk and Norwich University Hospital. This is located in the West Block of the hospital. You will be given the Mifepristone tablet to swallow. If all is well you can leave and we will ask you to return to the hospital either two or three days later to complete the process. If you do vomit within two hours of leaving the hospital please telephone the ward as the drug may not work.

There is a chance that, prior to returning to the hospital, your uterus (womb) may start to contract. A few women abort at home. You may experience crampy period pains and vaginal bleeding.

You should use a sanitary pad, not tampon, and take paracetamol if necessary. If you experience severe pain or heavy bleeding you should ring **Cley Ward** Norfolk and Norwich University Hospital (**01603 287242**).

Your return visit

You will be asked to attend Cley Ward two to three days after taking the tablet. If you have had any problems, mention them now. If all is well, treatment will continue. You will be given a vaginal pessary (misoprostol). You will be given more misoprostol as tablets by mouth during the day. Misoprostol causes the uterus (womb) to contract. You should expect vaginal bleeding, and some pain, which will peak at the time of the abortion. In due course you will pass the fetus. If you feel sick or need painkillers, please tell us: we can try to relieve this for you. We recommend painkillers for women undergoing this procedure.

The majority of women are able to go home the same day, but you may need to stay in the hospital overnight. You may be examined internally before you go home.

Complications are uncommon, but include the placenta not being completely expelled, smaller tissue fragments remaining in the womb, bleeding or infection. These may require further treatment, possibly a minor operation (a scrape of the womb) under general anaesthetic.

It is the policy of the Trust to bury fetuses with dignity. However alternatives to burial can be offered. Please ask a member of staff for further details.

What if I change my mind?

You should be certain about the abortion **BEFORE** you take the first tablet. If you decide to continue with the pregnancy after taking the tablet, there is a chance that the pregnancy may be affected by the tablet.

What to expect afterwards

You can expect to bleed and have period type pain for up to four weeks. If you bleed heavily, have strong pelvic pains or a fever, telephone Cley Ward for advice.

You should expect to feel back to normal a couple of weeks after the termination

If you do not use an effective form of contraception it is possible for you to get pregnant again immediately after the termination, so it is important that you start a reliable contraceptive method immediately (or as soon as possible) after the procedure. This will have been discussed with you during your appointment at the termination Clinic and arrangements for starting a method can be made.

Follow up appointment

If a follow-up appointment is required you will be advised by ward staff. If an appointment has not been made, but you wish to discuss contraception, you can make an appointment by contacting the iCASH Clinic on 0300 300 3030 or attend the Sit & Wait Clinic between 0900-1100 Mon, Tues, Thu and Fri at iCaSH, 1a Oak Street, Norwich NR3 3AE.