

Medication for Early Pregnancy Abortion

How does medication abortion work?

Medication abortion involves taking the medications mifepristone (brand name Mifeprex) and misoprostol (brand name Cytotec) to end an early pregnancy.

- **Mifepristone** blocks pregnancy hormones, which stops the pregnancy from growing. Taking this pill starts the abortion process.
- **Misoprostol** helps the uterus to empty by causing contraction of the uterine muscles. This leads to cramping and heavy vaginal bleeding. Taking this pill helps to complete the abortion process.

You will need to come in for a blood test 4-14 days later to confirm that the abortion is completed. Sometimes, an ultrasound may be used instead.

What should I expect?

1. Before your visit, we will order lab work to confirm your blood count (hemoglobin) and blood type.
2. Your provider will see you in the office to review your medical history, make sure that a medication abortion is a safe option for you, and to confirm how far your pregnancy has progressed, which may require an ultrasound.
3. You will take mifepristone with your provider in the office. You may feel mildly nauseous or begin to have light spotting after taking mifepristone. During this visit, we will order another blood sample to measure the pregnancy hormone level (hCG).
4. You will also receive a prescription for 4 misoprostol pills, ibuprofen, and an anti-nausea medication.

5. 24-48 hours after you take the mifepristone, you can place the misoprostol pills between your cheek and gums and allow them to dissolve for 30 minutes.
6. After 30 minutes, you may swallow any remaining pieces of the pills that are left. Alternatively, you may place misoprostol in the vagina as soon as 6 hours following mifepristone. Most people will begin to have cramping and bleeding between 1 and 4 hours after taking misoprostol.
7. About 5-7 days later (depending on your doctor's specific recommendation), you will go to a lab to have another blood sample taken to measure the pregnancy hormone level. We compare this test to the first level to ensure that the pregnancy hormone has decreased appropriately.

How do I manage pain?

- Most people manage pain well with ibuprofen (Advil or Motrin). You can take up to 800 mg every 8 hours with food to avoid an upset stomach.
- You may also take acetaminophen (Tylenol) in addition to the ibuprofen.
- Do not take aspirin, as it may make your bleeding worse.
- You can also use a heating pad or hot water bottle on your belly.

What symptoms are normal?

- Heavy bleeding with blood clots up to the size of a lemon
- Intense cramping that is similar to or worse than a normal period
- Nausea and occasionally vomiting

When should I call the office?

Call the office if you have any of the following symptoms:

- You vomit 30 minutes or less after taking either mifepristone or misoprostol (you may need to take it again)
- You are soaking one large maxi pad in less than an hour, for 2 hours or more

- You have a fever of 100.4° or greater

If you are experiencing an emergency, go to the nearest emergency room.

What is the contact information?

- For questions, call your provider or the women's clinic at Von Voigtländer at (734) 763-6295
- For urgent concerns listed above, call Triage at (734) 764-8134

Follow up:

- You will receive instructions from your provider on when to return for your follow-up blood test (about 5-7 days later). You may walk-in to any Michigan Medicine MLabs location. A list of MLabs locations can be found here:
<http://michmed.org/jO40w>
- For additional support, visit Exhale the after-abortion hotline:
<https://exhaleprovoice.org/>

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