

Your Guide to Medical Abortion: Step-by-Step Instructions & Recovery

Treatment Timeline



Step 1: Initiating the Process

Take One Mifepristone Tablet (Green Box)



Take this single pill orally.

⚠️ Monitor for Early Bleeding

Some patients may begin bleeding after this first step: if you vomit within 30 minutes of taking the pill, contact your clinic immediately.

Step 2: Ending the Pregnancy (24-48 Hours Later)

24-48 Hours

Prepare for the Process



30 minutes before taking Step 2, you may take Advil/Tylenol for pain and Gravol/Pepto Bismol for nausea.

Administer Four Misoprostol Tablets (Orange Box)



Place two tablets in each cheek (between the cheek and gum) and hold them there for 30 minutes before swallowing any remaining fragments with water.



The First 1-4 Hours

Cramping and bleeding typically begin during this window; it is recommended to rest for at least 3 hours after administration.

What to Expect: Symptoms & Management



Peak Cramping and Bleeding

The most intense symptoms generally last 4-6 hours as the pregnancy tissue is passed.



Common Side Effects

You may experience nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, dizziness, or chills, which are expected to resolve within 24 hours.



Pain Management Techniques

Use a heating pad or hot water bottle on your abdomen and frequently massage the lower abdomen to ease discomfort. Use Ibuprofen (Advil) and/or Acetaminophen (Tylenol), as advised by your healthcare team.



Recovery and Follow-Up



The 7-Day Safety Rule

Do not insert anything into the vagina (no sex, tampons, or baths) for one week to prevent serious infection.



Mandatory Blood Tests

You must complete a second blood test 7 days after Step 1 to confirm the abortion was successful.



Long-term Expectations

Light bleeding/spotting can last 3-4 weeks; your normal menstrual period should return within 4-8 weeks. Contact the clinic if you experience ongoing bleeding beyond 4 weeks.

Emergency Red Flags: When to Seek Help

Contact our clinic or go to an Emergency Room



Very Heavy Bleeding: The '2-2' Rule

Seek emergency care if you soak through two or more thick sanitary pads per hour for two consecutive hours.



Large Blood Clots

Contact a health professional if you pass tissue or blood clots that are larger than the size of a fist.



Severe Cramping Not Relieved by Medication

Contact the clinic, or see a healthcare professional, in the event of severe cramping that is not improved by pain relief medication.



Persistent Fever or Illness

Seek immediate help for a fever/chills lasting over 6 hours or feeling sick (weakness/vomiting) more than 24 hours after the second medication.

Statistical Risks and Effectiveness

Fully Effective Treatment* 95% - 97.3%

Requirement for Surgical Completion 2.7% - 5.1%

Requirement for Blood Transfusion 0.1%

* This may include requiring an additional dose of Misoprostol.

CANADIAN WOMEN'S CLINIC