



Comparison of *surgical* and *medical* abortion

Surgical abortion:

- Up to 16 weeks gestation
- A surgical procedure
- 5 -10 minutes procedure in hospital
- One clinic visit
- Approximately 99% effective
- Professional care provided in a hospital
- Anaesthesia required
- Light to moderate bleeding after procedure
- Mild to moderate cramping
- Limited side effects
- Recovery within 24 hours
- No deaths in Australia
- Generally safe for women of all ages

Medical abortion:

- Up to 9 weeks gestation
- Non- surgical procedure (two types of tablets)
- Miscarriage completed within 24 hours at home but may take longer
- At least 2 clinic visits **Second visit is essential to confirm if abortion is complete**
- Approximately 95% effective. **If tablets fail, surgical abortion is essential**
- Care is provided by patient's support person at home
- No anaesthesia required
- Heavy bleeding with clots
- Moderate to severe cramping
- Nausea, vomiting and diarrhoea
- Recovery may take longer
- One death in Australia in 2011
- Limited safety information on the use of drugs in: *18 years of age and women 35 years of age who smoke 15+cigarettes/day;*

PLUS, NOT recommended for women with: hypersensitivity to active substances; chronic adrenal failure; severe disease (e.g. asthma uncontrolled by treatment) that necessitates exogenous steroid administration; and haemorrhagic disorders, hypocoagulation diseases, & treatment with anticoagulants; if you have a failed intra-uterine device (IUD) in place.

References:

1. Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists. Abortion. RANZCOG (March 2019)
2. Safe Abortion: Technical and Policy Guidance for Health Systems. WHO (2012)
3. Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists. National evidence-based guidelines: the care of women requesting an induced abortion. London: RCOG (November 2011)
4. Therapeutic Goods Administration, Consumer Medicine Information. Mifepristone Linepharma (March 2017)