



## AT-HOME INSTRUCTIONS MEDICAL ABORTION: PILL METHOD

WE URGE YOU TO READ THESE DIRECTIONS SEVERAL TIMES PRIOR TO YOUR PART OF THE MEDICATION ABORTION AND CALL US WITH ANY QUESTIONS.

The misoprostol you received in your take home bag is the second step to completing your medication abortion. It causes uterine contractions and bleeding that will expel your pregnancy. Follow the directions below for the dosing method agreed upon with your counselor:

1. **Vaginal- 24 to 72 hours after your appointment, wash your hands thoroughly, put 4 misoprostol tablets into the provided inserter and place the pills up high in the vagina, close to the cervix (preferred method). The FDA recommends waiting at least 24 hours after your appointment for this method.**
2. Buccal- 24 to 48 hours after taking the mifepristone, dissolve 4 tablets of misoprostol buccally (between your cheeks and gums) for 30 minutes. Then, take a small sip of water and swallow any remaining pill fragments.
3. Sublingual- 24 to 48 hours after taking the mifepristone dissolve 4 tablets of misoprostol sublingually (underneath your tongue) for 30 minutes. Then, take a small sip of water and swallow any remaining pill fragments.  
~If you choose to use the buccal or sublingual method, take the first meclizine pill (nausea medicine) provided in your take home bag one hour prior to dosing.
4. If bleeding has not occurred within 48 hours of the first dose of misoprostol, repeat the misoprostol dose using the remaining 4 misoprostol tablets.

What can I expect to happen next?

- Bleeding and cramping typically begin 2 to 4 hours after taking the misoprostol tablets. Some patients may start earlier or even after this typical time frame, every uterus responds differently. Drink fluids and eat lightly throughout the abortion and recovery. When cramps begin, take the provided ibuprofen as directed for pain. The prescription for Tylenol 3 (acetaminophen) can be filled as needed, do not take over the counter Tylenol in addition to this. Do not take any products with aspirin in them!
- It is not uncommon to experience cramping before bleeding starts. Lower abdominal cramping and bleeding is a sign that the pregnancy tissue is passing down through the cervix. This may occur in waves and is generally tolerable if you take your pain meds at the first sign of cramping to provide maximum relief.
- Until it is determined your Medication Abortion is complete, don't take aspirin. Your take home bag has several medications to use only as directed. Ibuprofen is the best choice to help with cramping. The acetaminophen (Tylenol) with codeine prescription should be filled as needed for pain not controlled by ibuprofen. Meclizine is to help prevent nausea (use as needed for nausea during your pill process). Alert our staff to any medication allergies and what type of reaction you have.
- When the abortion happens, the bleeding could be heavy with large clots. Some patients report lesser bleeding, cramping and clotting yet still pass the pregnancy. Remember your uterus is individual to you. The bleeding and cramping to pass the pregnancy can last for several hours. Blood clots from pea sized to the size of an orange can be expected. The pregnancy tissue is VERY small and will expel amongst the bleeding and clots. We urge you to stay home at this time. Once this tissue has passed, the bleeding and cramping will begin to ease.
- Your bleeding should decrease over the next few weeks to a light flow, followed by spotting. Every uterus reacts differently, so it is difficult to predict how much bleeding you will have. Do not use tampons. Use maxi pads as needed until you have your next period in roughly 4 to 8 weeks.
- **Contact Scotsdale Women's Center immediately if:**
  1. You are soaking through 2 or more maxi pads per hour, 2 hours in a row,
  2. Your temperature is 100.4 degrees or higher two times in a row,
  3. You "...feel sick", or develop abdominal pain/discomfort, weakness, nausea, vomiting or diarrhea more than 24 hours after taking the misoprostol.
- A fever may be a sign of a developing infection. Taking an accurate temperature is important! Do not check your temperature within 1/2 hour of smoking, drinking, or eating. These may alter the thermometer's true reading.

- Mild cramping may continue after the pregnancy tissue has passed, use your pain meds as directed. A warm heating pad/hot water bottle placed over the abdomen is soothing. This cramping usually resolves within a week.
- Pregnancy hormones may cause breast tenderness, a snug fitting bra will resolve this in a couple of days. Hormone levels take time to decrease after the pregnancy tissue passes, do not take a pregnancy test until 4 weeks after your appointment! You may experience some fatigue or depression as your body returns to pre-pregnancy condition.
- Resume usual activities: school, work and driving as you feel up to it. Avoid strenuous activities (heavy exercise, lifting, bicycling or jogging) if bleeding is heavier than your usual menstrual period.
- Due to Covid-19 and in accordance with National Abortion Federation protocol, we no longer require in person Follow Up appointments. You will receive follow up calls from Clinic staff a few days after your pill insertion. You must be available for these calls to determine if your abortion is complete. **Please return any missed call**, tell the Phone Counselor: "I am returning a Pill Follow Up Call". Be prepared to answer questions regarding your experience, including day of appointment and weeks you were pregnant. If it is determined your pregnancy tissue has not passed or you have a positive pregnancy test 4 weeks after appointment day, an in-person appointment will be scheduled. The Doctor will evaluate you and decide if a third dose of misoprostol or a surgical completion of the abortion is necessary.
- **An exception to the above protocol: Patients OVER 9 weeks at time of termination must call to arrange in person follow up. Generally, this should be scheduled two weeks after your medication abortion.**
- The above Follow Up protocol must be adhered to as Misoprostol can cause fetal deformities if the pregnancy were to continue. Other side effects of Misoprostol are usually mild and short-lived. They may include vaginal bleeding, passing clots, lower abdominal pain/cramping, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, chills, fever, fatigue or dizziness.
- Do NOT have unprotected sex, you are at risk for pregnancy and possible infection.

**Remember:**

- ✓ Read all at-home instructions
- ✓ Have plenty of pads on hand, no tampons
- ✓ Fill Tylenol 3 prescription as needed
- ✓ Eat and drink lightly to minimize nausea
- ✓ Expect medical staff to call you a few days after you take the at home medications.
- ✓ DO NOT TAKE A PREGNANCY TEST UNTIL 4 WEEKS AFTER YOUR APPOINTMENT!

- You should start to feel better each day after the abortion. Side effects including feeling sick, abdominal pain/discomfort, diarrhea, nausea, vomiting, fever, chills or weakness more than 24 hours after taking the misoprostol are not expected and may be signs that you are developing a serious infection. **Call Scotsdale Women's Center at (313) 538-2020 right away if you develop any of these symptoms!**

My signature is acknowledgement that the preceding information has been thoroughly explained to me, that I understand the information as explained, that I had the opportunity to ask all my questions, and that all of my questions were answered to my complete satisfaction and understanding. (updated 11/11/2022)

Patient Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Counselor Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_