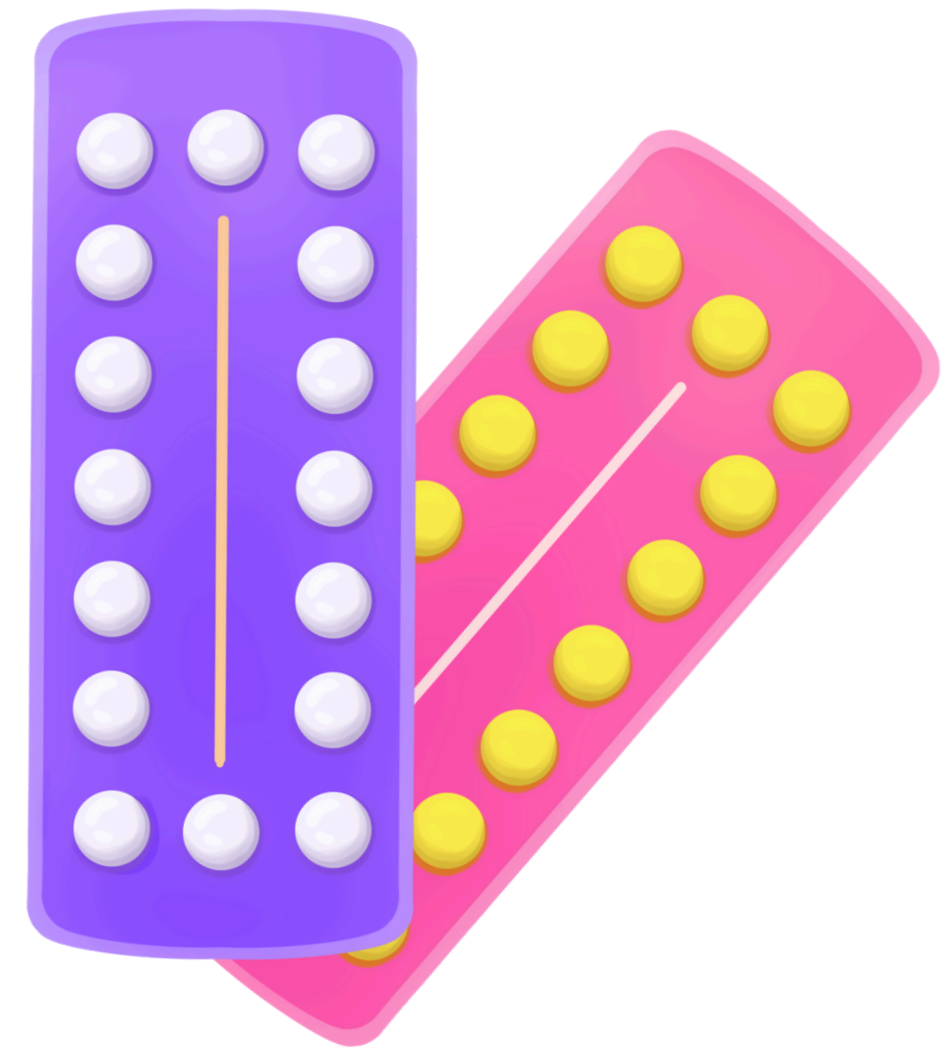


SMA GUIDE

What You Should Know



All you need to know about

1

Menstruation and Pregnancy

- Menstruation
- Menstrual Cycle
- Pregnancy

2

Self Managed Abortion

- Before using the medication
- With misoprostol alone
- With mifepristone and misoprostol
- What to expect.

3

Post Abortion Care

- Contraception
- Mental Health

Menstruation

When a girl reaches puberty, her body starts releasing egg cells from her ovaries. This is called ovulation. If she has sex and a sperm joins with the egg, she can become pregnant. But if the egg isn't fertilised, the body gets rid of it along with some blood and tissue from the uterus. This process is called menstruation, or having a period, and it usually happens about once a month.

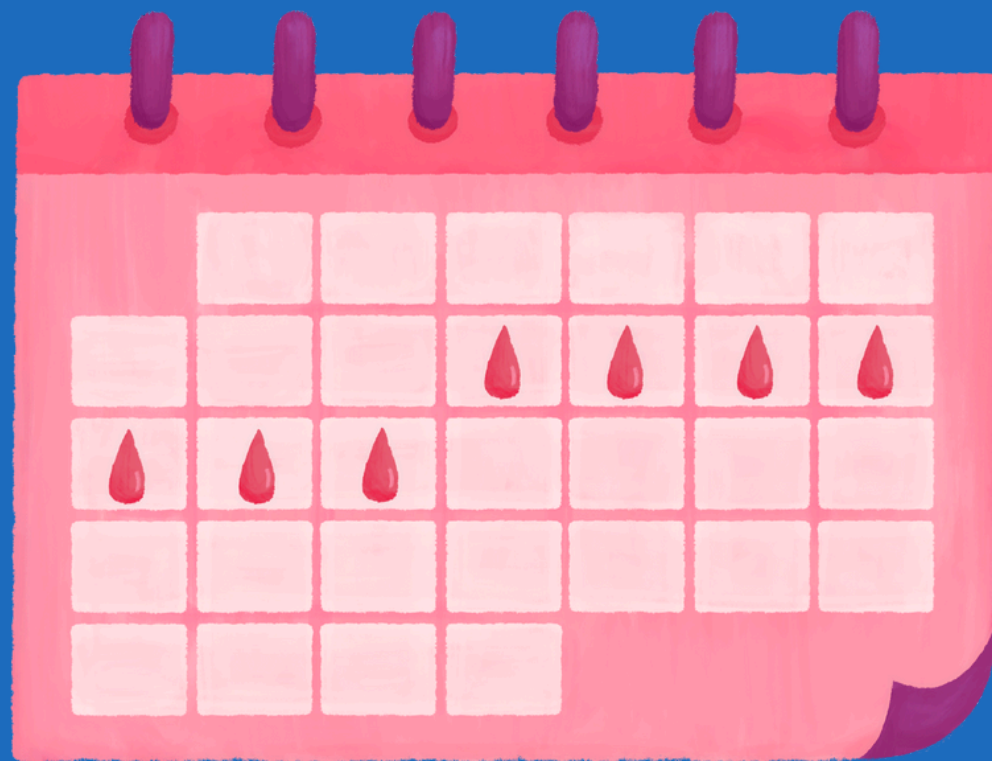


Menstrual Cycle

The menstrual cycle is something that happens in most girls' and women's bodies after puberty. Each month, the body gets ready for a possible pregnancy by building up a soft lining inside the uterus (the part of the body where a baby can grow). Around the middle of the cycle, an egg is released from the ovaries, this is called ovulation.

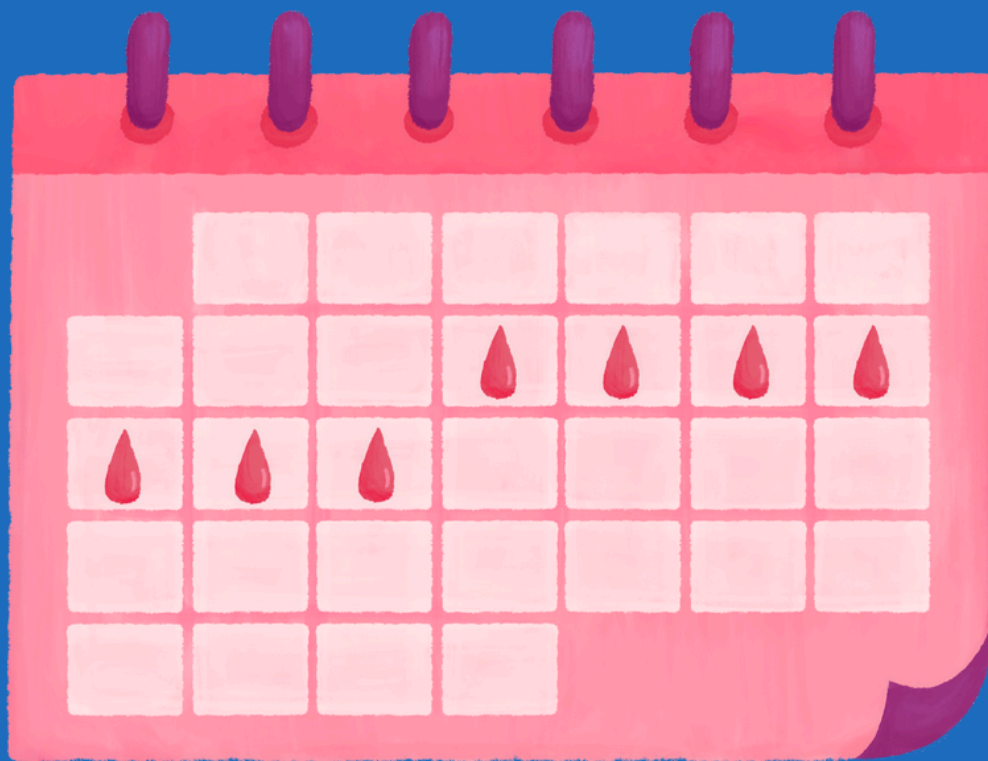


Menstrual Cycle cont'd



If the egg isn't fertilized by a sperm, the body doesn't need the lining anymore, so it breaks down and leaves the body through the vagina. This is called a period, and it usually lasts a few days. Then the cycle starts all over again. It's a natural part of growing up and shows that the body is healthy and working as it should.

Menstrual Cycle cont'd



A woman is most likely to get pregnant a few days before ovulation, during ovulation, and up to one day after it. That's called the fertile window. But pregnancy can still happen at other times in the cycle, even if the chances are lower. Sperm usually live inside the body for 1 to 2 days, but in rare cases, they can survive up to 4 to 7 days, though that's not very common.

Pregnancy

When a woman becomes pregnant, one of the first signs is usually that her period doesn't come. Sometimes, she might still have a little bleeding, which can be confusing. Other common signs of pregnancy include feeling sick or throwing up, feeling very tired, needing to pee more often (especially at night), sore or swollen breasts, and changes in how hungry she feels. But not every woman has these symptoms; some feel completely normal at first.



Pregnancy cont'd

To find out if a woman is pregnant, she can take a pregnancy test. This test detects a hormone called hCG, which appears in the body during pregnancy. She can do a urine test at home using a kit from the pharmacy. If she wants a blood test, she'll need to go to a doctor or clinic. Both tests help confirm if she's pregnant



Self-Managed Abortion (SMA)

- With misoprostol alone
- With mifepristone and misoprostol



Before using the medication

Almost all women can do a self-managed medical abortion but in very few cases some medical conditions can be a problem.

Using misoprostol alone

Women who shouldn't attempt to self-manage abortion with misoprostol alone¹³ are those with:

- Previous strong allergic reaction to misoprostol.
- Known or suspected ectopic pregnancy.

Using mifepristone and misoprostol

Women who shouldn't attempt to self-manage abortion with mifepristone and misoprostol are those with:

- Previous strong allergic reaction to mifepristone and or misoprostol.
- Known or suspected ectopic pregnancy.
- Inherited porphyria.
- Chronic adrenal failure or hepatic failure.

Ectopic (outside of the uterus) pregnancy is an uncommon, but potentially life-threatening event, occurring in 1.5–2% of pregnancies¹³. If the medications are used they will not be harmful or cause rupture, but they will not be effective in terminating the pregnancy.

Recommended Precautions

1

If the woman has serious health issues like heavy bleeding problems, heart disease, or very low blood levels, abortion can be riskier because of the chance of losing too much blood. Conditions like haemophilia or severe anaemia make this even more dangerous. If there's no safer way for her to have an abortion, she might still be able to take abortion pills, but it's really important that she's not alone and stays close to a hospital or clinic in case something goes wrong. Her safety should always come first.

2

If the woman has been diagnosed with an STI like Chlamydia or Gonorrhea, or any infection, she is advised to see a doctor so that the infection can be treated.

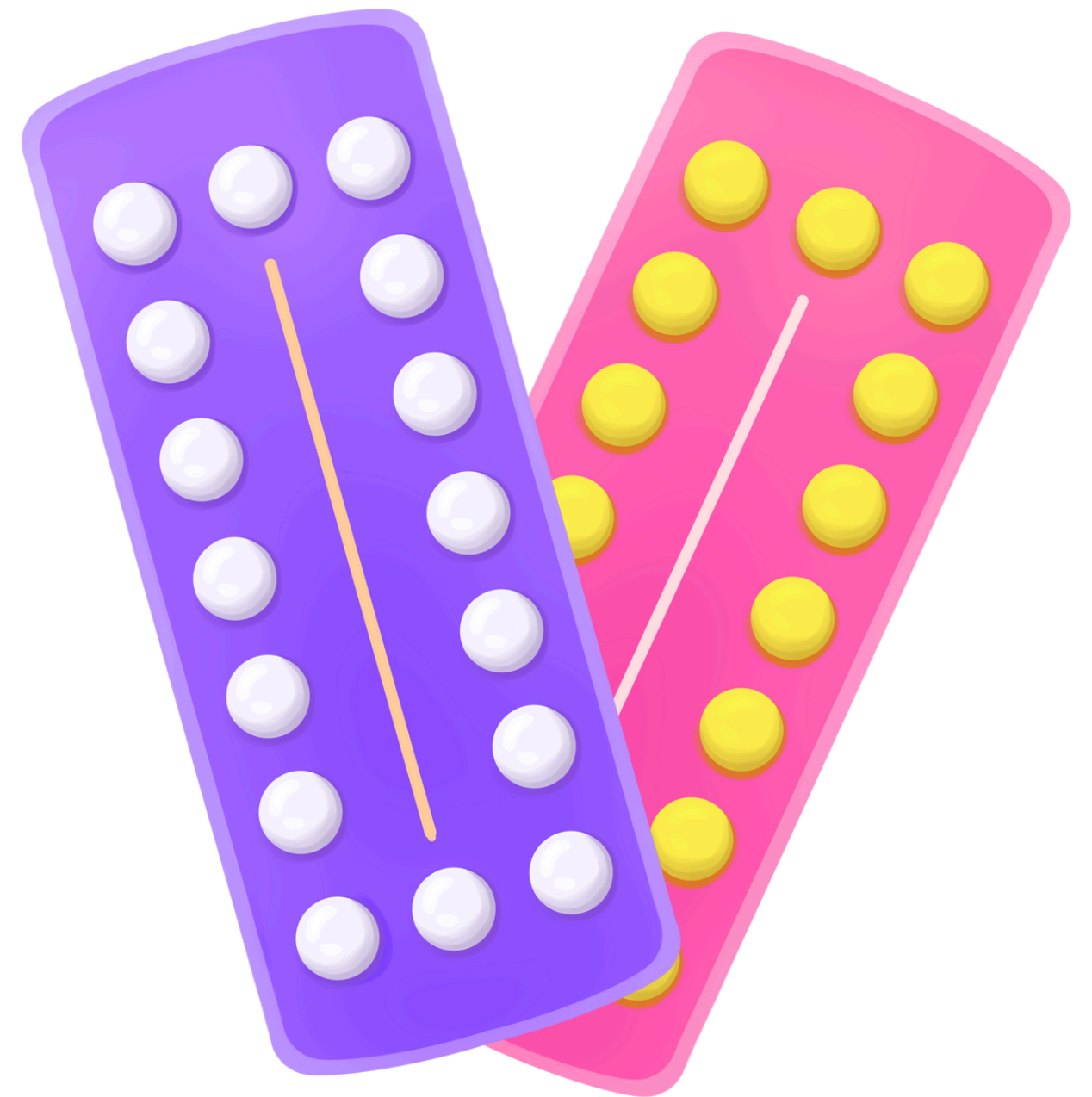
3

If the woman has an intrauterine device (IUD), in this case, she should have the IUD removed first .

In case the woman cannot remove the IUD (if no doctor or health professional agrees to remove it) she can still do the medical abortion. There are no studies to verify whether having an IUD in place poses actual risks during medical abortion.

Using the medication

- **With misoprostol alone**
- **With mifepristone and misoprostol**



With misoprostol alone

1

First Dose

A woman should put 4 pills of 200 micrograms (in total 800 mcg) of misoprostol **under the tongue**. She should not swallow the pills for at least 30 minutes until the tablets are dissolved! (She can swallow her saliva). After 30 minutes it is OK to swallow the remnants of the pills).

2

Second Dose

After 3 hours she should put another 4 pills of misoprostol under the tongue and let dissolve.

3

Third Dose

After 3 hours she should put another 4 pills of misoprostol under the tongue and let dissolve.

Women shouldn't eat or drink anything while the pills are dissolving to avoid swallowing them before the 30 minutes. Anything left in the mouth after 30 minutes can be swallowed. Before and after using the misoprostol she can eat and drink normally, but should not use drugs or alcohol that could affect her consciousness; she needs to be able to pay attention to her body.

With misoprostol alone cont'd


 12 pills in total
to be taken in 3 doses of
4 pills every 3 hours:



 Place 4
misoprostol pills
under the tongue   For 30 minutes
 Do not swallow, let it dissolve

 +  After 3 hours place
another 4 pills
under the tongue   For 30 minutes
 Do not swallow, let it dissolve

 +  After 3 hours place
another 4 pills
under the tongue   For 30 minutes
 Do not swallow, let it dissolve

With mifepristone and misoprostol

In the first 12 weeks of pregnancy, a woman will need 1 mifepristone 200mg and 4 misoprostol tablets (200 mcg each)

1 First Dose

Mifepristone should be swallowed with a glass of water.let dissolve.

2 Second Dose

24 hours later, the woman should take 4 pills of 200 micrograms (in total 800 mcg) of misoprostol - place the tablets between the gum and cheek, two on the left side and two on the right side. She should not swallow the pills for at least 30 minutes until the tablets are dissolved! (She can swallow her saliva). After 30 minutes it is OK to swallow the remnants of the pills).

The success rate in the first 12 weeks of pregnancy is 95 - 98%. This means that only 1 of every 20 women who use mifepristone and misoprostol correctly will still need additional medical care. The research shows that after a medical abortion with mifepristone and misoprostol in the first 12 weeks around 1.3% of women will have a continuing pregnancy.

With mifepristone and misoprostol



MIFEPRISTONE
200mg



MISOPROSTOL
200mcg each

1 Mifepristone tablet (200 mg) plus
4 Misoprostol tablets (200 mcg each)



 + 
MIFEPRISTONE

The mifepristone
should be swallowed
with a glass of water.

24 hours later the woman can use
4 pills of misoprostol buccally



between the gum and the
cheek, two on the left side and
two on the right side.

All four pills should be left in the mouth
for approximately 30 minutes to dissolve.



What to expect?

after the medical abortion



What to expect after medical abortion

When a woman has a medical abortion, her body goes through changes to end the pregnancy. One of the first signs is bleeding, which shows that the process has started. As things move forward, the bleeding and cramps usually get stronger. This is normal and means the pregnancy is being passed out of the body. The heaviest bleeding can last for a few hours and may be more than a regular period, with blood clots and stronger pain.

How long it takes can be different for each person. After the pregnancy tissue passes, the cramps usually get better. The bleeding slowly becomes lighter over the next few days, and some spotting may continue for one to three weeks, sometimes longer or shorter. Everyone's experience is different.

A woman's regular period usually comes back in about four to six weeks, but that can also vary.

Handling pain



It is possible to take painkillers preventively and/or when the pain arises. According to current research the most appropriate painkiller for the cramps during medical abortion is IBUPROFEN

Hot water bottles or a heating pad also help. Other methods for reducing pain are relaxing with music, a movie, or whatever a woman generally uses when dealing with menstrual cramps.



Post abortion care

contraception
mental health

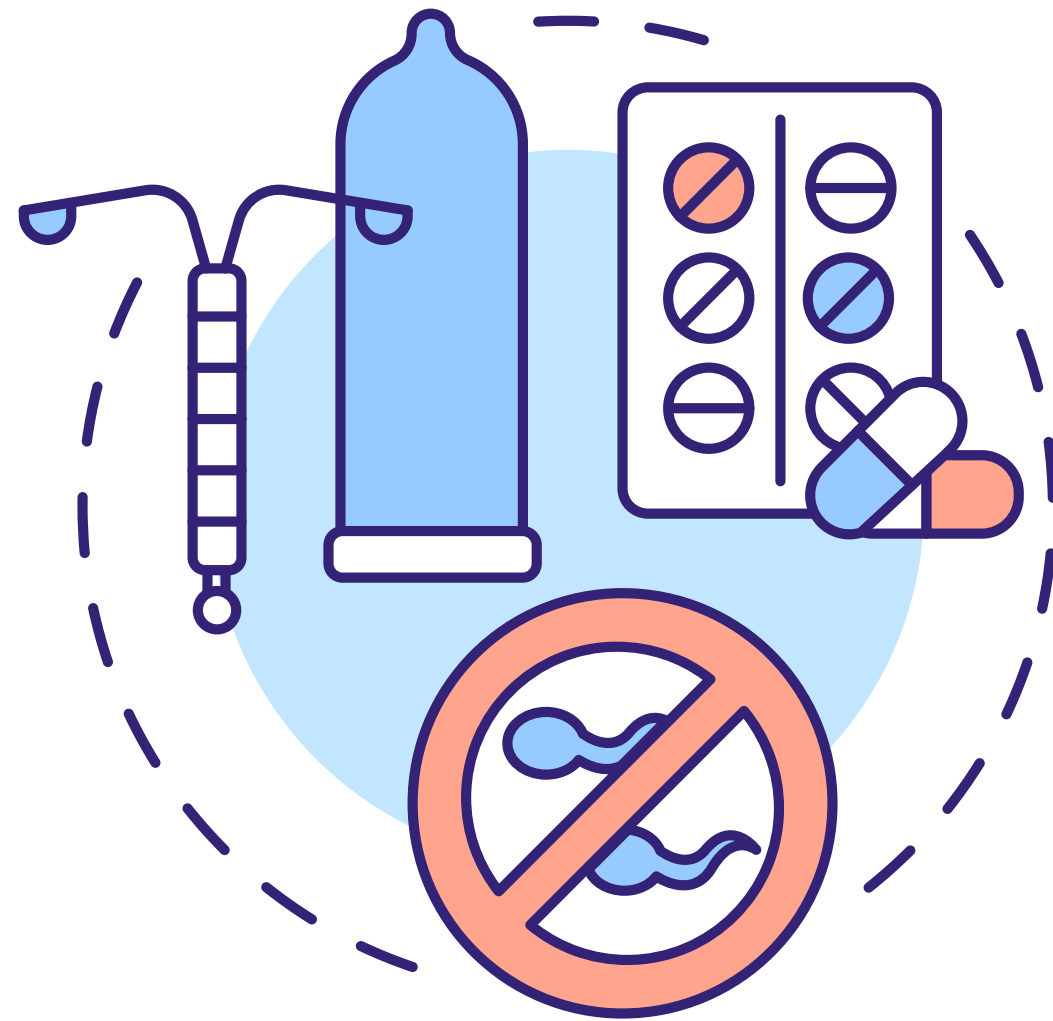


Contraception

Most women who have sex without using any form of birth control will get pregnant within a year, about 85 out of 100. A woman's body can start releasing eggs again as soon as 25 days after giving birth, and even just 8 days after an abortion or miscarriage. It's also possible to get pregnant during a period, even though it's less common.



Contraception Options



1

IMPLANTS/IUD

Must be placed in uterus by a health care provider
Usually removed by a health care provider

2

Pills

Must be taken daily.

3

Condoms

Use a new condom each time you have sex . Use a polyurethane condom if allergic to latex.

4

Emergency Contraceptives (EC)

Works best the sooner you take it after unprotected sex. You can take EC up to 5 days after unprotected sex. If a pack contains 2 pills, take both together.

Mental Health

After an abortion, it's normal to go through a mix of emotions; some people feel sad, anxious, or even relieved. Hormones can shift a lot during this time, which might cause mood swings. Having someone to talk to, like a friend, family member, or counselor, can really help. If your feelings start to affect your daily life or stick around for a long time, it's a good idea to talk to a doctor. Everyone reacts differently, and whatever you're feeling is valid.



Need Emotional Support?



1

Talk to Trusted People

Speak with friends, family, or a partner about your feelings.

2

Professional Support

Seek counselling from a trained professional to discuss your worries and emotions.

3

Normalise Your Experience

Recognize that your emotional experience is valid, and many people have similar feelings after an abortion.

4

No Right or Wrong Way to Feel

There is no single "correct" emotional response after an abortion.

REMEMBER

This is YOUR body, YOUR health, and YOUR future. Stay informed, make safe choices, and never be afraid to seek help. You've got this!

NEED MORE INFO?

Explore our website for more information and educational videos.