



This handout explains the follow-up care after a pregnancy is ended using medications, also known as a *medical abortion*.

# Medical Abortion

*Follow-up at home after receiving mifepristone*

In the clinic, you received mifepristone, a medication used to stop a pregnancy from growing. Sometimes mifepristone causes uterine cramping, vaginal bleeding, nausea, and vomiting.

**Do NOT eat grapefruit or drink grapefruit juice for 24 hours after taking mifepristone. Grapefruit interferes with the way mifepristone works.**

## Using Your Misoprostol Tablets

You will go home with 8 misoprostol (Cytotec) tablets. Misoprostol will make your uterus contract and empty.

Your doctor has advised you on the method checked below for using these tablets:

- In 6 to 72 hours, place 4 misoprostol tablets in your vagina. Lie down for 30 minutes after placing the tablets to keep them from falling out.

**OR**

- In 24 to 72 hours, place 4 misoprostol tablets inside your cheek (*buccally*) and allow them to dissolve.

### *Steps to Follow*

1. Take ibuprofen (Advil, Motrin) or naproxyn (Aleve) as directed by your doctor **before** placing the misoprostol tablets.
2. Place the 4 misoprostol tablets as checked above.
3. Your doctor may prescribe narcotic pain medication for you. If you are still having pain after using the misoprostol, you may take 1 or 2 of the narcotic pain pills every 4 to 6 hours as needed.
4. If you do not have any bleeding in 12 to 24 hours, you may use the second 4 misoprostol tablets. Use the same method you used the first time (in your vagina or inside your cheek).

## Questions?

Your questions are important. Call your doctor or health care provider if you have questions or concerns. Clinic staff are also available to help.

- UWMC Maternal and Infant Care Clinic:**  
206-598-4070  
Box 356159  
1959 N.E. Pacific St.  
Seattle, WA 98195
- UWMC Women's Health Care Center:**  
206-598-5500  
Box 354765  
4245 Roosevelt Way N.E.  
Seattle, WA 98195
- UWMC Family Medicine Center:**  
206-528-8000  
University of Washington  
Neighborhood Clinic - Northgate  
314 N.E. Thornton Pl.  
Seattle, WA 98125
- Harborview Family Medicine Clinic at the Pat Steele Building:**  
206-744-8274  
401 Broadway, Suite 2018  
Seattle, WA 98104
- Women's Clinic at Harborview:**  
206-744-3367  
325 Ninth Ave.  
Ground Floor, West Clinic  
Seattle, WA 98104

## When to Call the Clinic

Call the clinic if you:

- Do not have bleeding and cramping within 72 hours of placing the misoprostol
- Have heavy vaginal bleeding that is soaking through more than 2 maxi-pads an hour for 2 or more hours in a row
- Have a fever higher than 100.4°F (38°C) for more than 4 hours
- Are vomiting for more than 4 hours
- Have a lot of pain, even with pain medicine
- Are concerned and want to talk with a health care provider

## After the Procedure

- You may continue to have some vaginal bleeding for 2 to 8 weeks.
- Return to the clinic in 1 or 2 weeks to make sure that the pregnancy has passed. Cramping and bleeding do not mean for sure that your pregnancy has ended. You must have an ultrasound to make sure your uterus is completely empty.
- Do not put anything in your vagina for 1 week.
- Wait 1 week before having sex.
- Start birth control before you have sex. You can get pregnant during this time if you are not using birth control.
- Expect your next period to start in 4 to 8 weeks.
- You may resume normal activities the day after your abortion, if you feel ready. If an activity makes your cramping or bleeding worse, do not do that activity for a few days.
- Avoid heavy physical activities for 1 week.
- Take good care of yourself. Rest when you are tired, eat healthy foods, and drink plenty of fluids.

UW Medicine

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