

Early medical abortion (EMA) of pregnancy at home

Department of Gynaecology

Information for Patients

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Introduction

We understand that you do not wish to continue with your pregnancy as you feel this is unsafe, unplanned or unintended. We understand this is a difficult decision to make and we are here to support your decision and provide you with safe medical care.

You have chosen to have, or are thinking of having medical management of abortion. We hope the information here will explain your options.

If you have any questions or if there is anything you do not understand, please ask the nurse, doctor or service team at the Orchid Clinic.

Early medical abortion

Medical abortion is where you take medicine to end the pregnancy.

Medical abortion **up to 10 weeks** can be **managed at home**. The nurse or a doctor will assess your health and consider the support you have at home, to see if this is the best choice for you.

Day 1 in hospital:

An abortion medication tablet (**mifepristone**) will be given to you to swallow. You do not need to stay in hospital after taking this tablet, but if you are sick (vomit) within 1 hour of taking the tablet, you should contact the team at the Orchid Clinic as you will need to take another tablet.

**Health information and support is available at www.nhs.uk
or call 111 for non-emergency medical advice**

Visit www.leicestershospitals.nhs.uk for maps and information about visiting Leicester's Hospitals
To give feedback about this information sheet, contact InformationForPatients@uhl-tr.nhs.uk

Day 2 at home:

Usually 24 hours after your visit to the hospital you will take:

1. **Misoprostol (800 micrograms (4 tablets))** - you can insert these high in your vagina (stay on a bed for at least 30 minutes afterwards if you do), or put the tablets under your tongue, or dissolve between your cheek and gum (tablets can be swallowed after 30 minutes).
2. The lining of the womb will break down, causing pain, bleeding and loss of the pregnancy. Sometimes you may need to take more doses of misoprostol to get the pregnancy to pass. **After 3 hours take another dose of misoprostol (400 micrograms (2 tablets))** under the tongue or against the cheek if the termination has not completed.

We strongly advise that you have a trusted adult with you at home to offer you support, and help you if you become worried about your treatment or you become unwell. However, you may make an informed choice not to involve anybody else.

What happens after I have taken the tablets?

How much bleeding will there be in the next few days and weeks?

Expect to have heavy period type bleeding, passing clots and pregnancy tissues for the next 1 to 4 days, followed by on and off bleeding for up to 2 to 3 weeks. Usually most bleeding settles within 7 to 10 days.

How much pain will there be?

Expect to have strong period type cramp until the pregnancy passes completely. This may take a few days. You may take regular painkillers (co-codamol, paracetamol, ibuprofen) whilst you are having pain, but be careful not to take more than 8 paracetamol or co-codamol tablets in a day.

What can I eat and drink?

Eat comfortably. Drink plenty of fluid (water, juice, milk) to help keep you hydrated.

Can I continue to breastfeed?

Breastfeeding is thought to be safe after taking mifepristone and misoprostol.

Contact the team at the Orchid Clinic if:

- you vomit within 1 hour of taking the first tablet (mifepristone) in hospital.
- you have no bleeding within 24 hours of taking the misoprostol tablets.
- you fail to take the misoprostol tablets as instructed.

What is the chance of failure of the abortion?

1 to 2 out of 100 abortions fail to end the pregnancy.

Occasionally, if the pregnancy does not pass you will need an operation to remove it or repeat the medical management. This happens to less than 1 in 20 women.

What if I change my mind?

We don't know what the risk of continuing the pregnancy are after taking mifepristone or misoprostol. You should be absolutely certain you wish to go ahead with the abortion before you take any tablets.

Contact the Orchid Clinic if you have symptoms suggesting the pregnancy is continuing and you are concerned:

- If you have less than 4 days of bleeding.
- If you still "feel" pregnant at the end of 1 week e.g. sickness, sore breasts, growing tummy.
- A urine pregnancy test is still showing as positive after 3 weeks.
- You have not had a period 4 to 5 weeks after the termination.

Contact the hospital if you have any of the following:

- Heavy bleeding for more than 7 days.
- Severe pelvic pain or pain that does not settle after taking regular painkillers.
- You don't feel well or you feel faint even though you have been drinking plenty of fluids.
- You have a high temperature for more than a day (this can happen after taking misoprostol).
- Abnormal or smelly vaginal discharge.

Contact details

If you have any questions or there is anything you do not understand, please ask the nurse, doctor or service team at the Orchid Clinic.

- **Orchid Clinic Service** (Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm): 0116 258 5939
- **Gynaecology Assessment Unit** (Monday to Sunday, 24 hours):
0116 258 6259 / 0116 258 7793
- **Counsellor** (Monday to Friday, 9am to 4pm): 07534 168299

Further information

You can visit <https://leicestersexualhealth.nhs.uk> for advice on contraception and sexually transmitted infections (STIs)

You can use the space below to write down and remind yourself of any questions you may have:

اگر آپ کو یہ معلومات کسی اور زبان میں درکار ہیں، تو براہ کرم مندرجہ ذیل نمبر پر ٹیلی فون کریں۔
على هذه المعلومات بلغة أخرى، الرجاء الاتصال على رقم الهاتف الذي يظهر في الأسفل

જો તમને અન્ય ભાષામાં આ માહિતી જોઈતી હોય, તો નીચે આપેલ નંબર પર કૃપા કરી ટેલિફોન કરો

ਜੇ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਇਹ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਕਿਸੇ ਹੋਰ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਵਿਚ ਚਾਹੁੰਦੇ ਹੋ, ਤਾਂ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਹੇਠਾਂ ਦਿੱਤੇ ਗਏ ਨੰਬਰ 'ਤੇ ਟੈਲੀਫੋਨ ਕਰੋ।
Aby uzyskać informacje w innym języku, proszę zadzwonić pod podany niżej numer telefonu

If you would like this information in another language or format such as EasyRead or Braille, please telephone 0116 250 2959 or email equality@uhl-tr.nhs.uk