

Surgical abortion of pregnancy under general anaesthetic

Department of Gynaecology

Information for Patients

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Introduction

This leaflet gives you more information about your abortion and what you can expect. We understand that having an abortion might be a difficult decision for you make. Staff are here to listen to any concerns or worries you may have and support you in making the right decision for you in your circumstances.

The abortion will **not** take place today. We will give you an appointment date. This will be when you return to have the abortion.

You will see either a doctor or nurse specialist for a consultation. You will also have an ultrasound to check the pregnancy is growing in the womb and how far pregnant you are. The doctor or nurse specialist will talk to you about your options during this consultation.

We will offer you a sexual health screen to check for infections before the procedure. This can pick up any infections that might cause problems for your own health or your partner's. We will also do some blood tests before surgery to check your blood group and the need for anti-D injections as well as for anaemia, sickle cell disease or other problems.

What happens during a surgical abortion of pregnancy?

We can offer surgical abortion care up to around 14 weeks gestation. This is a short operation in an operating theatre to remove the pregnancy whilst you are asleep (under general anaesthetic).

The operation takes 10 to 15 minutes. Before the operation, staff will place tablets (prostaglandin) inside your vagina or under your tongue to soften the neck of the womb (cervix).

During the surgery, the neck of the womb (the cervix) is stretched. We remove the pregnancy tissue using a suction tube attached to a vacuum pump.

**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

How does prostaglandin work?

Prostaglandin works by softening the neck of the womb (cervix), to reduce the chance of failed procedure or damage to the cervix or womb. This can sometimes cause some sickness and diarrhoea, cramps or bleeding. If for any reason the operation is significantly delayed, it could start the abortion off with contraction type pains.

How long will I be in hospital for?

The operation is almost always done on a day case basis. Sometimes women do need to stay overnight in hospital for medical reasons. We will give you an information sheet. It has your appointment date and time, as well as do's and don'ts.

What are the risks?

A surgical abortion of pregnancy is safe. As with any operation there are certain medical risks and complications which can arise.

Complications are not common, with less than 1 in 100 women having a serious complication.

The 5 main complications are:

- Infection (if untreated or severe this can lead to infertility or ectopic pregnancy) less than 1 in 10 after infection screening
- Bleeding or losing too much blood (haemorrhage) or needing a blood transfusion (1 in 1000)
- Surgical damage (tear) of the wall of the womb or cervix and surrounding organs (1 in 1000)
- Failure or incomplete abortion needing another procedure (1 to 5 in 100)
- Regrets, sadness and other difficult emotional feelings

When to get help after you have gone home

Contact your own doctor or phone the Gynaecology Assessment Unit if:

- you are bleeding heavily that is changing a soaked sanitary towel more than 4 times in 1 hour, and it does not seem to be stopping.
- the pain you are getting is becoming worse and cannot be controlled by 2 paracetamol taken regularly every 4 hours.
- you feel feverish or have a temperature
- your vaginal loss has an bad smell



Contraception

Contraception will be discussed with you at your first clinical appointment. It is important that you try to make a decision about future contraception at that time, if possible, so we can help you arrange this to reduce the chance of unwanted pregnancy.

There are a wide variety of hormonal and non-hormonal methods of contraception to choose from. We hope to give you expert and non-biased advice. We do recommend long acting reversible contraception (LARC) - Injection, Implant, IUD and IUS as they have less failure.

Contraception advice

Haymarket Sexual Health and Contraception Clinic: 0300 124 0102

Trust policy

This hospital can offer safe abortion care up to around 14 weeks pregnant (gestation), unless there are urgent medical grounds for doing it later (for example, risk to your life).

Pregnancy tissue is disposed of in a respectful manner at the council crematorium. This will be discussed with you sensitively, and you will be asked if you consent to this.

Useful contacts

Nurse Specialists—(Monday to Friday) 0116 258 5939

Gynaecology Assessment Unit Leicester Royal Infirmary (24 hours) 0116 258 6259

Gynaecology Counsellor 07534168299 (self referral - call this number and leave you contact details and she will call you back with an appointment). She works Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday

British Pregnancy Advisory Service (BPAS) - 0845 730 4030

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 અસ્ય 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 nizej numer telefonu

Previous reference:

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