

MEDICALLY-INDUCED POST-ABORTION *SELF-CARE*



Support material for abortion accompaniment

Ipas
LATINOAMÉRICA
Y EL CARIBE



This material is part of a package of publications intended to facilitate the accompaniment of women facing an unexpected or unwanted pregnancy.

The package is divided into 3 booklets that have relevant information about the option to terminate the pregnancy: Before a medically-induced abortion, during, and after the procedure. We recommend using all 3 booklets and sharing the information with whoever needs it.

Additionally, at the end of each booklet, you will find references to some free digital resources that can facilitate follow-up, updated documents, and useful tools.

Support material for the accompaniment of abortion.

3. After a medically-induced abortion.

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Ipas is an international nonprofit organization that works on four continents to increase the ability of women to exercise their sexual and reproductive rights, especially the right to abortion.



After a medically-induced abortion

This booklet has information on medically-induced and self-managed postabortion care. The information in this material will be useful if you accompany someone who has undergone a medically-induced abortion procedure, or if you find yourself in this situation.

For more information, you can refer to Booklets 1 and 2, which have useful information before a medically-induced abortion procedure is performed and what happens during it.

Post-procedure symptoms

It is normal for tiredness, nausea, fever, dizziness, or chills to occur after taking the last dose of misoprostol, these tend to disappear within a maximum of 24 hours. If you want to check the symptoms that occur immediately after taking misoprostol, refer to section “Evolution of the

medical abortion process”, of material 2: “During an induced abortion with medications”, of this material package, where they are described in detail.

The use of pain medications helps mitigate some discomfort, it is important to have them on hand and use them only while the abortion procedure is taking place. The recommended medications are Ibuprofen or Paracetamol.



Remember that heavy bleeding or clots may occur, this is normal due to the expulsion of uterine content. This bleeding will decrease over the days.

In case of any doubt or suspicion of failure, it will be necessary to go to a follow-up medical consultation.

When to resume daily activities?

Cramping, bleeding, and spotting may occur after an abortion. Although the person may want to rest for a while, most people return to their normal activities the next day.



After a medically-induced abortion, coital or erotic intercourse can be done as soon as the person feels ready. If a pregnancy is not desired soon, it is necessary to start the use of contraceptive methods because a new pregnancy could arrive immediately.

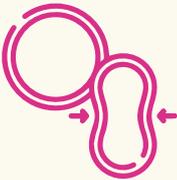
Contraception

It is advisable to adopt a contraceptive method since fertility will return shortly after the abortion and a new pregnancy could occur almost immediately, even a week or two later.

It is possible to go to public or private health service units to choose a contraceptive method. Except for intrauterine devices, most methods can be used immediately after taking medications or as soon as bleeding begins. It is not necessary to wait for the abortion to be completed, contraceptives do not interfere with its success.

Public health service units must provide contraceptive methods free of charge. For example, you can request the insertion of an implant, which is a very effective and long-lasting method.

It is also possible to start any other hormonal method (such as birth control pills, patches, or injections). In addition to granting the preferred contraceptive method, they offer condoms, and depending on availability and legality in the territory, they can give the emergency contraception pill (ECP).



It is recommended that, in addition to the chosen contraceptive method, an internal or external condom be used in each sexual intercourse, as a double protection against unplanned pregnancy, as well as against sexually-transmitted infections.

Emotional accompaniment and socialization of the experience

There is no scientific evidence that abortion causes mental health problems. There is no such thing as a post-abortion syndrome.”People who decide to interrupt a pregnancy can experience a variety of emotions, often associated with other conditions they are facing at the time: The couple’s relationship, how much support the person receives from their family, how the pregnancy happened, etc. Most people who decide to terminate a pregnancy feel relieved when the process is over, especially if they have a chance to talk about it and feel supported.

In most of the territories, there are organizations, groups, networks, and allies that provide individual and group accompaniment with a gender perspective. In many cases, this accompaniment is provided virtually. Women can approach trusted organizations in their locality.





It is rare to speak publicly about our abortion experiences, as it is often thought that we will be judged. There are still many prejudices based on religious, moral, political, sexist positions, etc., and when these prejudices come out, they can affect those people who told their stories. Thus, thinking that they are going to judge us negatively, a vicious circle begins with the idea of “not talking about it (abortion)”; when in reality, remaining silent is not the best option neither for the people who interrupt a pregnancy nor for society in general.

Because of this, it is very important to talk about our abortion experiences with each other; learning that many people have made the same decision, or that we can make it at some point, and knowing that we are accompanied. Living any experience of life alone is not healthy. On the contrary, talking about our experiences, including abortion, allows us to reduce prejudices and live our decision as a right.

Support tools for the accompaniment of medically-induced abortion

Following you will find resources to expand your knowledge about self-management of medical abortion, tools that can be used during accompaniment, and some materials that we recommend you share with the women you accompany.

Documents that you can consult and have as a reference



WHO abortion guidance, 2022.
<https://srhr.org/abortioncare/>



Safe Abortion App, Hesperian.
<https://bit.ly/aplicacion-aborto-seguro>



Technical Guideline for Safe Abortion care,
Government of Mexico.
<https://bit.ly/lineamiento-tecnico-aborto>



Contraceptive Counseling Manual.
<https://ipasmexico.org/pdf/IpasMx2019-ManualConsejeria.pdf>



Abortion and mental health.
<https://ipasmexico.org/pdf/lpasCAM-2020-AbortoySaludMental.pdf>



Focos (Spotlights). Turn on your voice.
<https://www.focos.org.mx/focos/>



Abortion in the voice of women who used misoprostol.
<https://ipasmexico.org/2020/03/11/aborto-seguro-de-voz-de-las-mujeres-que-usaron-medicamentos/>

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The information provided in this material is for informational purposes and is based on the most recent clinical evidence available and the current legal framework in Mexico at the time of publication.