

PREVENTING PREGNANCY

Are You Under 18?

If you are a teenager, you may be uncomfortable discussing birth control. However, to protect your health and keep control of your reproductive life, we encourage you to talk about these issues with a health care professional, your parents or another trusted adult. Minors (those under the age of 18) are not legally required to notify or get permission from their parents to obtain birth control. However, it is wise to ask a clinic's policy regarding confidentiality for minors.

Birth Control Methods

There are more forms of birth control available today than ever before. All are designed to prevent pregnancy. Only latex condoms, properly used, offer reliable protection against sexually transmitted diseases (STDs). As with any medication or device, it is best to consult a health care provider to determine the safest and most effective method for you.

Family Planning Services

Family planning plays a critical role in reducing unintended pregnancy. The Virginia Family Planning Program offers comprehensive family planning services to assist low income citizens to plan and space their pregnancies.

For more information, contact familyplanning@vdh.state.va.us or call (804) 786-8663.

Public Health Family Planning Services

Local health departments in Virginia provide family planning services and offer a variety of reproductive health services including annual exams, Pap smears, STI testing and treatment, and prenatal care. Services vary, so call first to confirm whether the service you need is available and to schedule an appointment.

Health departments are listed alphabetically by county/city and grouped by location.

Alexandria City
(703) 746-4996

Arlandria and Alexandria City
(703) 535-5568

Alexandria City
(703) 746-4776

Alleghany County and Covington
(540) 962-2173

Alleghany County and Clifton
(540)862-4130

Amelia County
(804) 561-2711

Amherst, Madison Heights, Gladstone,
Gladstone, Vesuvius, Monroe, Arrington,
Clifford
(434)946-9408

Appomattox, Spout Spring, Bent Creek,
Pamplin, Evergreen, Redhouse, Gladstone,
Stonewall
(434)352-2313

Arlington County
(703)228-1200

Bath County
(540)839-7246

Bedford City and Country
(540)586-7950

Bland County
(376)688-3642

Botetourt County
(540)473-8240

Bristol City
(276)642-7335

Brunswick County
(434)848-2517

Buchanan County
(276)935-4591

Buckingham County
(434)969-4244

Buena Vista
(540)261-2149

Caroline County
(804)633-5465

Carroll County
(276)730-3180

Charles City
(804)829-2490

Charlotte Court House
(434)542-5251

Charlottesville and Albemarle County
(434)972-6200

Chesapeake
(757)382-8632

Chesapeake
(757)382-2650

Chesterfield County
(804)748-1743

Clarke County
(540)955-1033

Colonial Heights
(804)520-9380

Craig County
(540)864-5136

Culpeper County
(540)829-7350

Cumberland County
(804)492-4661

Danville
(434)766-9800

Dickenson County
(276)926-4979

Dinwiddle County
(804)469-3771

Eastern Henrico County
(804)652-3190

Eastern Shore
(757)302-4228

Eastern Shore
(757)414-6228

Emporia &Greensville
(434)348-4210

Essex County
(804)443-3396

Farmville
(434)395-2102

Fauquier County
(540)347-6400

Floyd County
(540)745-2141

Fluvanna County
(434)591-1960

Franklin City
(757)562-6109

Franklin County and Rocky Mount
(540)484-0292

Frederick County and Winchester
(540)722-3470

Fredericksburg
(540)899-4142

Galax County
(276)236-6127

Giles County
(540)921-2891

Gloucester County
(804)693-2445

Goochland County
(804)556-5843

Grayson County
(276)773-2961

Greene County
(434)985-2262

Halifax County and South Boston
(434)476-4863

Hampton
(757)727-1172

Hanover County
(804)365-4313

Harrisonburg and Rockingham County
(540)574-5100

Henry County and Martinsville
(276)638-2311

Highland County
(540)468-2270

Hopewell
(804)458-1297

Isle of Wight County
(757)357-4177

King & Queen County
(804)785-6154

King George County
(540)775-3111

King William County
(804)769-4988

Lancaster County
(804)462-5197

Lee County
(276)346-2011

Lexington and Rockbridge County
(540)463-3185

Loudoun County
(703)777-0236

Louisa County
(540)967-3703

Lunenburg
(434)696-2346

Lynchburg
(434)947-6785

Madison County
(540)948-5481

Manassas
(703)792-6301

Martinsville
(276)403-5788

Mecklenburg County
(434)738-6545

Middlesex County
(804)758-2381

Montgomery County
(540)381-7100

Nelson County
(434)263-8315

New Kent County
(804)966-9640

Newport News, Poquoson, York County, Williamsburg, James
City County
(757)594-7300

Norfolk
(757)531-2130

Northumberland County
(804)580-3731

Nottoway
(434)645-7595

Orange County
(540)672-1291

Page County
(540)742-6528

Patrick County and Stuart
(804)693-2070

Petersburg
(804)863-1652

Pittsylvania County
(434)432-7232

Portsmouth
(757)393-8585

Powhatan County
(804)598-5680

Prince Edward County and Farmville
(434)392-8187

Prince George County
(804)733-2630

Prince William County, Manassas City,
Manassas Park, Woodbridge (Dale City,
Dumfries, Triangle)
(703)792-7301

Pulaski County
(540)994-5030

Radford
(540)831-5774

Richmond City
(804)205-3722

Richmond City
(804)358-8538

Richmond City
(804)780-0840

Richmond City
(804)591-2890

Richmond City
(804)525-1800

Richmond City
(804)525-1818

Richmond County
(804)333-4043

Roanoke City
(540)204-9994

Roanoke County and Salem
(540)387-5530

Roanoke County and Vinton
(540)387-7800

Russell County
(276)889-7621

Rustburg, Brookneal, Evington, Altavista,
Concord, Lynch Station, Redhouse, Sugar Hill,
Naruna
(434)592-9550

Scott County
(276)386-1312

Shenandoah County
(540)459-3733

Smyth County Saltville Satellite
(276)781-7464

Southampton County
(757)653-3040

Spotsylvania County
(540)507-4700

Stafford County
(540)659-3101

Staunton and East Augusta County
(540)332-7830

Suffolk
(757)514-4700

Surry County
(757)294-3185

Sussex County
(434)246-8611

Tazewell County
(276)988-5585

UVA – Wise
(276)376-4590

Virginia Beach
(757)518-2700

Warren County
(540)635-3159

Washington County
(276)676-5604

Waynesboro and West Augusta County
(540)949-0137

Western Henrico County
(804)501-4522

Westmoreland County
(804)493-1124

Wise County and Norton
(276)328-8000

Wythe County
(276)228-5507

Birth Control:

For more information on the following birth control methods, please visit this website:
<http://www.plannedparenthood.org/health-info/birth-control>

Birth Control: Non-Prescription Methods

These birth control methods generally are available without a prescription at pharmacies, grocery stores, health departments and family planning clinics. Effectiveness data is adapted from the birth control guide published by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA).

Male Condom

The male condom is a sleeve usually made of latex or polyurethane that fits over an erect penis and blocks the passage of sperm during intercourse. Out of 100 women whose partners use this method, 11-16 may get pregnant. Latex condoms are the best protection against HIV/AIDS and other STIs. Male condoms are available without a prescription at pharmacies, markets, health departments and family planning clinics.

Female Condom

The female condom is a lubricated polyurethane sheath shaped similarly to the male condom. The closed end has a flexible ring that is inserted into the vagina. Out of 100 women who use this method, about 20 may get pregnant. They can also be more expensive than male condoms.

Vaginal Spermicides

A spermicide is a foam, cream, jelly, film, suppository, or tablet that contains nonoxynol-9, a sperm-killing chemical. Used independently, out of 100 women who use this method, about 30 may get pregnant. When used in combination with barrier methods of birth control, such as condoms, diaphragms, and cervical caps, spermicides can increase the overall effectiveness of the birth control method. Keep in mind that spermicide cannot reduce the risk of sexually transmitted infections. Use latex or female condoms to reduce the risk of infection.

Birth Control: Prescription Methods

The following methods require a visit to a health care provider for a prescription. The descriptions are adapted from the birth control guide published by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA). Failure rates are based on information from clinical trials submitted to the FDA.

Oral Contraceptives (“The Pill”)

There are several different forms of oral contraceptives, including a combined pill and a progestin-only pill, which must be taken on a daily schedule regardless of the frequency of intercourse. The combined pill suppresses ovulation by synthetic estrogen and progesterone hormones. Combination pills work best when taken every day. The progestin-only pill contains synthetic progesterone that acts to reduce and thicken cervical mucus to prevent sperm from reaching the egg. Progestin-only pills must be taken at the same time every day. Birth control pills may also act to alter the lining of the uterus, which may prevent implantation of a fertilized egg. Out of 100 women who use this method, about 5 may get pregnant. The pill requires a prescription that can be filled by most pharmacies. Some health departments and family planning clinics can fill their own oral contraceptive prescriptions.

Cervical Cap

A cervical cap is a soft rubber cup with a round rim, which is inserted into the vagina prior to intercourse and fits snugly around the cervix. Spermicides are used in conjunction with this barrier method, which should be left in place for eight hours after intercourse. Out of 100 women who use this method with spermicide, about 17-23 may get pregnant. A visit to a health care provider is required to determine the proper size and to obtain a prescription. Keep in mind that cervical caps do not protect you from sexually transmitted infections. Use a condom to reduce the risk of infection.

Contraceptive Patch (Ortho Evra)

Ortho Evra is a skin patch worn on the lower abdomen, buttocks, or upper body that releases the hormones progesterin and estrogen into the blood stream. A new patch is applied once a week for three weeks out of every month and followed by one week without the patch. Out of 100 women who use this method, about 5 may get pregnant. The patch may be less effective for women who weigh more than 198 lbs. The Patch may be less effective on women weighing more than 198 pounds. A visit to a health care provider is required to obtain a prescription.

Depo-Provera

Depo-Provera is an injection of progesterin that inhibits ovulation, prevents sperm from reaching the egg, and prevents the fertilized egg from implanting in the uterus. The injection lasts three months and is typically given in the arm or buttocks. Out of 100 women who use this method, less than 1 may get pregnant. Keep in mind the birth control shot doesn't protect against sexually transmitted infections. Use a latex or female condom to reduce the risk of infection. The shot requires a prescription and visit to a health care provider every three months. Its effects cannot be reversed during this three month period.

Diaphragm

The diaphragm is a dome-shaped rubber disc with a flexible rim that covers the cervix so that sperm cannot reach the uterus. Inserted into the vagina, it fits over the cervix and is held in place by the vaginal muscles. Spermicide should be applied to the diaphragm before insertion, and it should be left in place for six to eight hours after intercourse. Out of 100 women who use the Diaphragm with spermicide, about 15 may get pregnant. Women who have given birth will experience decreased effectiveness since the stretching of the vagina and cervix make a proper fit more difficult. A visit to a health care provider is required to determine the proper size and to obtain a prescription.

Intrauterine Device (IUD)

An Intrauterine Device is a small T-shaped object inserted into the uterus through the cervix to prevent pregnancy. The device can remain in place for one to 10 years, depending on the type. Out of 100 women who use this method, less than 1 may get pregnant.

IUDs require a visit to a health care provider for insertion and removal.

Vaginal Contraceptive Ring (NuvaRing)

NuvaRing is a flexible ring about 2 inches in diameter that is inserted into the vagina and releases the hormones progesterin and estrogen. It is self-inserted and remains in the vagina for three weeks, then removed for one week. Out of 100 women who use this method, about 5 may get pregnant. NuvaRing requires a visit to a health care provider to obtain a prescription.

Birth Control: Permanent Methods

These methods are surgical methods and are generally considered nonreversible. The descriptions are adapted from the birth control guide published by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA). Failure rates are based on information from clinical trials submitted to the FDA.

Female Sterilization

Female sterilization is surgery performed by a physician in which the fallopian tubes are cut, burned, or blocked so that the egg and sperm cannot meet. It is a one-time surgical procedure and is approximately 99 percent effective. Most kinds of sterilization for women are effective right away. But it takes about three months before Essure (a non-surgical method) is effective. Tubal ligation can be done as an outpatient procedure and is over 98 percent effective as birth control.

Male Sterilization (Vasectomy)

Male sterilization is a surgery in which the vas deferens, the tubes that carry sperm from the testicles to the penis, are cut, tied, or blocked. Vasectomies are almost always done as an outpatient procedure. Vasectomies are the most effective birth control for men. It is nearly 100 percent effective. However, vasectomies are not immediately effective. Sperm remains beyond the blocked tubes. You must use other birth control until the sperm is used up. It usually takes about three months.

Preventing Pregnancy after Unprotected Sex or When Your Regular Method Fails

Emergency contraception (EC) is a safe method of pregnancy prevention. Emergency contraceptive pills (ECPs) are similar to regular birth control pills but are only taken for one or two days. Emergency contraception, also known as the “morning after” pill, is most effective when taken within 72 hours of unprotected sex. Recent studies suggest that emergency contraception may be effective when taken up to five days after sexual intercourse. However, the earlier you take emergency contraception, the more likely it is to prevent pregnancy. Emergency contraception will not work if you are already pregnant. Emergency contraception pills are 75-89 percent effective at preventing pregnancy; the sooner they are taken after unprotected sex, the more effective they will be.

You should not use emergency contraception pills as your regular form of birth control. They are not as effective as more conventional birth control methods, and it would be very expensive to use emergency contraception frequently. Neither emergency contraception nor birth control pills will protect you from sexually transmitted diseases.

Use Emergency Contraception to Prevent Pregnancy When You Have Had Sex and:

- The birth control method you used broke or failed;
- You didn't use birth control;
- You missed taking two or more birth control pills;
- You are two or more days late starting your pills;
- You missed your Depo-Provera shot;
- You were raped or coerced into unprotected sex.

It is important to seek emergency contraception services as soon as possible.

Emergency Contraception Does Not Cause Abortion

Emergency contraception does not cause an abortion or the termination of a pregnancy. In medical terms, a woman is pregnant after a fertilized egg has implanted in her uterine wall. Emergency contraception prevents ovulation, fertilization and/or implantation. It prevents a pregnancy from occurring. Emergency contraception is not the abortion pill (RU 486 or Mifeprex) and does not induce abortion. Emergency contraception will not work if you are already pregnant. It will not harm a pregnancy or the fetus.

What to Expect and What to Do After Using Emergency Contraception

- Emergency contraception is not always effective. If you do not get your period within three weeks of taking emergency contraception, or if you have signs of pregnancy, schedule a follow-up visit with your health care provider as soon as possible to find out if you are pregnant;
- Your next period may be slightly off -schedule, a little earlier or later than usual;
- Your menstrual flow may be lighter, heavier, or more spotty than usual;
- If you see a health care provider before you get your next period, be sure to tell the provider you have taken emergency contraception;
- If you have vaginal intercourse at any time before your next period, use another form of contraception to prevent pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases;
- See a health care provider if there is any risk that you may have been exposed to a sexually transmitted infection;
- Make a contraceptive plan for the immediate future so you don't have to rely only on emergency contraception.
- Obtain emergency contraception in advance so that you can have it on hand if you ever need it.
- Remember to replace it before its expiration date (2 years printed on the box)

Where to Get Emergency Contraception

Anyone, no matter how old you are can buy one dose versions of emergency contraception at your local pharmacy. These forms of EC include Plan B One-dose, Next Choice One Dose and some other brands of emergency contraception. If you are 16 years or younger you will need to get a prescription from a health care provider for two-dose versions of emergency contraception. All women need a prescription for ella. Please visit <http://www.plannedparenthood.org/health-info/birth-control/morning-after-pill-emergency-contraception> to compare various types of EC and for FAQ about effectiveness.

Emergency contraception prescriptions are available through many pharmacies, community health centers, Planned Parenthood facilities, public health centers, private health care providers' offices and at college health centers. You can get a prescription for emergency contraception through a health care provider. Once you obtain a prescription, you will need to fill that prescription at a local pharmacy.

“Crisis Pregnancy Centers,” Also Known As Fake Clinics

Over the past two decades, the anti-choice movement has set up thousands of fake health clinics across the country called “crisis pregnancy centers.” These centers are often listed in the Yellow Pages under headings such as Abortion Alternatives, Birth Control Information, Pregnancy Help, or Crisis Pregnancy Centers. They invite women into their facilities under the guise of providing counseling or abortion services. Once inside, women may be given a store-bought pregnancy test and then bombarded with anti-choice propaganda. This may include unrealistic stories about abortion, medically-inaccurate videos, and intrusive, hostile questions. There may not be any trained health care professionals on the premises, and these fake clinics do not generally provide any health care services for women.

Some Warning Signs of Fake Clinics:

- When you call to get information or to set up an appointment, beware of places that tell you that they will only give you information if you come into their office. It is your right to receive basic information over the phone.
- Beware of clinics that advertise free pregnancy tests and counseling, but are not clear about other health care services they offer;
- There are also websites run by people opposed to abortion rights. These websites often have misleading names to make you believe

you are receiving pro-choice information. Examples of anti-choice websites using deceptive names are www.birthcontrol.org and www.pregnancycenters.org.

Known Fake Clinics in Virginia

This listing of fake clinics in Virginia is not comprehensive. If you know of a “crisis pregnancy center” not listed below, please contact NARAL Pro-Choice Virginia at (571) 970-2536.

A Best Choice
Mobile Unit
Fairfax County
Prince William County

10378B Democracy Lane
Fairfax, VA 22030
Northern Virginia

Lynchburg, VA 24501
Lynchburg

A Woman's Choice
6201 Leesburg Pike
Falls Church, VA 22044
Northern Virginia

Bethany Christian Services
1510 Willow Lawn Dr, Ste 203
Richmond, VA 23220
Richmond

Blue Ridge Women's Center
5034 Williamson Rd NW
Roanoke, VA 24012
Roanoke

AAA Women for Choice
9380A Forestwood Lane
Manassas, VA 22110
Northern Virginia

Bethany Christian Services
287 Independence Blvd Suite 241
Virginia Beach, VA 23462
Virginia Beach

Care Net
321 Main Street C
Newport News, VA 23601
Newport News

Abba Pregnancy Care Center
200 Weems Road
Winchester, VA 22601
Winchester

Bethany Christian Services
5610 Southpoint Centre Blvd #107
Fredericksburg, VA 22401
Fredericksburg

Care Net Pregnancy Resource Center
1158 Professionals. Ste N
Williamsburg, VA 23185
Williamsburg

Albermarle Pregnancy Center
1420 Greenbriar Pl
Charlottesville, VA 22901
Charlottesville

Birtright
10752B Ambassador Dr
Manassas, VA 20109
Northern Virginia

Care Net Pregnancy Resource Centers
8741 Plantation Lane
Manassas, VA 20110
Northern Virginia

Alexandria Pregnancy Help Center
8305 Richmond Hwy, Ste 13A
Alexandria, VA 22309
Northern Virginia

Birtright
150 Kingsley Lane
Norfolk, VA 23505
Norfolk

Care Net Pregnancy Resource Centers
59 Frost Ave Ste 100
Warrenton, VA 20186
Warrenton

Assist Crisis Pregnancy Center
5101-D Backlick Rd
Annandale, VA 22003
Northern Virginia

Birtright
4235 Dale Blvd
Dale City, VA 22193
Northern Virginia

Care Net Pregnancy Resource Centers
3122 Golansky Blvd, Ste 101
Woodbridge, VA 22192
Northern Virginia

Bedford Pregnancy Center
813 East Main St
Bedford, VA 24523
Bedford

Birtright
2006 Lafayette Blvd, Ste 202
Fredericksburg, VA 22401
Fredericksburg

*Christian Outreach Program and
Pregnancy Center*
23878 N James Madison Hwy
Dillwyn, VA 23936
Dillwyn

Bethany Christian Services
1924 Arlington Blvd, Ste 101
Charlottesville, VA 22903
Charlottesville

Birtright
823 South King St, Suite I
Leesburg, VA 20175
Northern Virginia

Comfort Care Women's Health
1020 N Augusta St
Staunton, VA 24402
Staunton

Bethany Christian Services

Blue Ridge Pregnancy Center
1915 Thomson Dr.

Comfort Care Women's Health
Corner of 13th and Magnolia

Waynesboro, VA 22980
Waynesboro

Crisis Pregnancy Center of Roanoke Valley/Blue Ridge Women's Center
5034 Williamson Rd NW
Roanoke, VA 24012
Rocky Mount

Crisis Pregnancy Center of Metro Richmond
1510 Willow Lawn Dr., Ste 200
Richmond, VA 23230
Richmond

Crisis Pregnancy Center of Tidewater
102 Eden Way N Ste 116
Chesapeake, VA 23320
Chesapeake

East End Pregnancy Center
4705 Nine Mile Rd
Henrico, VA 23223
Henrico

Emergency Pregnancy Services Moriah Center/A Rode in Haste
3230B Duke Street
Alexandria, VA 22314
Northern Virginia

Fairfax Pregnancy Help Center
10380 Democracy Ln
Fairfax, VA 22030
Fairfax

Front Royal Pregnancy Center
11 S. Royal Ave.
Front Royal, VA 22630
Front Royal

Harrisonburg Pregnancy Center
833 Cantrell Ave
Harrisonburg, VA 22801
Harrisonburg

Hope in Northern Virginia
610 Park Avenue
Falls Church, VA 22046
Northern Virginia

Lady Care Intl
PO Box 3067
Chesapeake, VA 23327

Chesapeake

*Life Line/
1st Choice Women's Health Care*
19465 Deerfield Ave
Lansdowne, VA 20175
Northern Virginia

*Little Life/
Family Life Services of Southern VA*
2960 N Main Street
Danville, VA 24540
Danville

*Page Pregnancy Assistance Center/
The Life Center of Page Valley*
21 N Deford Ave
Luray, VA 22835
Luray

Pregnancy Care Center of MHC, Inc.
314 Fairy St Ste E
Martinsville, VA 24112
Martinsville

Pregnancy Help Center of Chesterfield
2675 Osborne Rd
Chester, VA 23831
Chester

Pregnancy Help Line
2960 N. Main St
Danville VA 24540
Danville

Pregnancy Resource Center of the New River Valley
995 Peppers Ferry Blvd.
Pulaski, VA 24301
Pulaski

Pregnancy Resource Center of the New River Valley
708 N Main Street
Blacksburg, VA 24060
Blacksburg

Pregnancy Support Center of Southside Virginia
1775 Zion Hill Rd
Farmville, VA 23901
Farmville

Pregnancy Support Centers of the Tri-Cities
700 S Sycamore St Ste 12
Petersburg, VA 28303
Petersburg

Shenandoah County Pregnancy Center
28 Cedarwood Ln
Edinburg, VA 22824
Edinburg

The Keim Center
302 N. Main St. Ste. A
Suffolk, VA 23434
Suffolk

The Keim Center
4356 Bonney Rd, Building 1, Ste 103
Virginia Beach, 23452
Virginia Beach

*The Keim Center/
Crisis Pregnancy Center of Tidewater*
4224 Portsmouth Blvd
Portsmouth, VA 23701
Portsmouth

*The Keim Center/
Crisis Pregnancy Center of Tidewater*
2121 Colonial Ave
Norfolk, VA 23517
Norfolk

(Accomack) Northampton Pregnancy Center
36318 Lankford Hwy
Belle Haven, VA 23306
Belle Haven

Pregnancy Centers of Central VA
320 W Main Street
Charlottesville, VA 22903
Charlottesville

Pregnancy Centers of Central VA
420 Sunset Lane
Culpeper, VA 22701
Culpeper

Pregnancy Centers of Central VA
323 C North Madison Rd
Orange, VA 22960
Orange

Tri-Area Crisis Pregnancy Center
111 N Main St
Galax, VA 24333
Galax

ABORTION CARE

Options Counseling

If you want to talk to a professional counselor to decide whether or not to continue your pregnancy, you have a right to compassionate, professional, and honest advice about all options. Planned Parenthood is a good place to start. Call (800) 230-PLAN (7526). You may also be able to talk with your health care provider. Additionally, the National Abortion Federation has a "Guide to Making the Right Decision for You" workbook available at <https://www.prochoice.org/Pregnant/options/right.html>.

Factual Information about Abortion and Pregnancy Options

Visit the National Abortion Federation website at <http://www.prochoice.org>, or call their toll-free hotline at (800) 772-9100 for non-biased factual information about abortion and pregnancy options in English or Spanish. The hotline operates Monday through Friday from 7 am to 11pm and from 9 am to 9 pm on Saturday and Sunday. You can also call the National Coalition of Abortion Providers at 202-419-1444 during weekday work hours.

Abortion Procedures: Medical Abortion

A medical abortion is a non-surgical method used to induce an abortion up to eight weeks after the start of the last menstrual period. The actual time limit may vary depending on the policy of the provider you choose. Medication is given either orally (Mifeprex, also called RU-486 or Mifepristone) or by injection (Methotrexate). This is followed by a second medication (Cytotec, also called Misoprostol). The combination of the two medications induces an abortion.

A medical abortion may be an option if:

- It has been eight weeks or less since the start of your last menstrual period;
- You are willing and able to give informed consent for the procedure;
- You live no more than two hours away from emergency medical care (a hospital);
- You agree to return to the clinic for one to three follow-up appointments;
- You agree to have a surgical abortion should the medications not induce termination.

After confirming the pregnancy, the first medication is provided at the clinic. This blocks the hormone progesterone that is needed to maintain the pregnancy. The uterine lining begins to shed, the cervix begins to soften and bleeding may occur.

Twenty-four to 72 hours later, the woman inserts small tablets of Misoprostol into her vagina or takes them orally. This causes cramping that leads to a miscarriage within six to eight hours. You will want to learn the specific series of events in this procedure from your health care provider.