



Family Planning Specialists Medical Group
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(510) 268-3720

Common Questions Women Have After An Abortion

Should I Limit My Activities?

It is best to rest after the procedure. If you are feeling fine, you may resume work and routine activities tomorrow. It is advisable to avoid heavy lifting (over 10 pounds) and other vigorous exercise for one week. Such activities can increase bleeding and cramping.

How Much Bleeding Will I Have?

You may have bleeding on and off for 2-4 weeks. It may vary from light to moderate until your next period comes in 4-8 weeks. It is also normal to have little or no bleeding. You may pass small blood clots or notice increased bleeding when you go to the bathroom. An episode of heavy bleeding and cramping may occur 4-6 days after the procedure. If this happens, lie down and rest. If your bleeding is excessive (soaking through more than 2 pads in an hour), or you are passing blood clots larger than a silver dollar, call us immediately.

How Much Cramping Will I Have?

Some women have very little or no cramping while others have moderate cramping. Severe cramping is intense and constant pain that makes you feel like doubling over. This kind of cramping must be reported to us immediately.

When Will I Have A Period?

It is impossible to predict exactly when you will have your period. Most women have a period 4-8 weeks after the procedure. We recommend that you call the clinic to schedule an exam if your period has not returned within 8 weeks.

How Can I Prevent Infection?

To help prevent infection, take all of your Doxycycline. Fever is an indicator of infection, so it is important that you take your temperature in the morning and early evening. Call us if your temperature is 100.4 or over. Nothing should be put in your vagina for 3 weeks (for abortions over 12 weeks) or 2 weeks (for abortions under 12 weeks). Do not have intercourse. Do not use tampons or douche. Take showers rather than baths. Do not swim or use a hot tub.

Will I Experience Breast Soreness?

Breast swelling, soreness, and discharge are common following an abortion performed after 12 weeks. If you experience these symptoms, wear a tight bra for 24 hours and use ice packs to

relieve discomfort. Do not squeeze or massage your breasts. Take two Tylenol every 4 hours to relieve pain.

What Medications Are Prescribed And How Do I Take Them?

- **Doxycycline®**

Doxycycline is an antibiotic which helps reduce the possibility of infection. Take one tablet 2 times a day, spaced 12 hours apart, until all the tablets are finished. Do not take this drug if you are nursing or allergic to Tetracycline. When taking Doxycycline, you are more sensitive to sunburn. Use sunscreen if you plan to be in the sun.

- **Tylenol® With Codeine #3**

Tylenol with Codeine#3 is a pain medication. Take one tablet every 3 to 4 hours as needed for pain. Do not take this medication on an empty stomach. **Do not drive or operate heavy machinery as Codeine may cause drowsiness.**

- **Methergine®**

Methergine is sometimes prescribed by the physician. It helps lessen bleeding by contracting the uterus, and might cause some mild cramping. Take one tablet 3 times a day until finished. Do not take this drug if you have high blood pressure.

When Is It Safe To Be Sexually Active?

You must avoid sexual intercourse for 3 weeks (for abortions over 12 weeks) or 2 weeks (for abortions under 12 weeks) following an abortion because you are more susceptible to infection at this time.

Do I Need To Have A Follow-Up Exam?

If you do not have any abortion related problems, a routine follow-up examination is not necessary. If you have any problems or concerns related to the abortion procedure or recovery, we urge you to contact Family Planning Specialists for an evaluation as soon as possible.

How Can I Expect To Feel?

Most women begin to feel normal within 24-48 hours following an abortion. Most pregnancy symptoms are gone within one week.

A variety of feelings are normal following an abortion. You may feel relieved that you have made a difficult decision and the abortion is behind you. You may experience a sense of loss and feelings of sadness. It usually helps to talk about your feelings with someone who is close to you and can offer support. We can also give you referrals for post-abortion counselling.

How Soon Can I Drive After I Have Had General Anesthesia?

You cannot drive or operate heavy machinery for 24 hours after you have received general anesthesia.

When Do I Call For Help?

- Fever 100.4 or over
- Excessive cramping
- Excessive bleeding
- Passing large blood clots

What Do I Need To Know When I Call?

- Your temperature within the last hour
- Number of pads used in the last hour
- Phone number of a pharmacy in case a prescription needs to be called in

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