

AFTERCARE INSTRUCTIONS

For the next week or two you may experience cramps, bleeding, and emotional changes. This information sheet will help to answer any questions you have. If not, please call us and we will be happy to help you with your concerns.

Please follow these instructions carefully:

- To reduce pain, inflammation and bleeding, take 600mg of ibuprofen every six hours for the first four to five days. *Do not take it if you are allergic to aspirin, ibuprofen, or Aleve.*
- Take your temperature by mouth each day for the next 7 days. *Call us if you have a fever over 100 degrees for more than four hours.*
- Do not use tampons for the first week. After 7 days, tampons are okay.
- Do not have sexual intercourse for 7 days. This will reduce your risk of infection. After a week, sex is okay, but *you can get pregnant again immediately if you have unprotected sex.*
- Showers and tub baths are okay, but do not use a hot tub or whirlpool bath.
- Rest as needed, drink plenty of fluids, and avoid strenuous activity.

For questions or emergencies during business hours, please call 603-225-2739. For after-hours emergencies, call our answering service and they will page the on-call person, who will call you back.

For after-hours emergencies: call 1-866-494-6365

WHAT'S NORMAL, WHAT ISN'T NORMAL, AND WHAT YOU CAN DO

BLEEDING AND CLOTTING: Results from hormone changes occurring after a pregnancy. May be steady or come and go, with episodes of heavy bleeding over the next week. Lighter bleeding and cramping may continue for another week or two. For 7 days use pads only; then tampons are okay.

What's normal:

- No bleeding, as long as you are feeling well
- Light to heavy bleeding over the next week, with or without clots, bright red or dark in color
- A sudden episode of very heavy bleeding and/or passing clots between 3 and 7 days after your abortion, may last several hours
- Light bleeding or spotting for several weeks

What you can do:

- Reduce physical activity, rest and elevate your feet, monitor number of pads used

When to call:

- No bleeding, accompanied by severe abdominal pain, bloating and tenderness
- Soaking 2 pads per hour for more than 2 hours
- Repeatedly passing large clots (golf ball size or larger), or large amounts of smaller clots

CRAMPING: the uterus contracts to return to normal size and to expel blood and clots

What's normal:

- Cramps like a normal period
- There may be an increase in cramping around day 4 or 5

What you can do:

- Reduce physical activity, rest and elevate your feet
- Use a heating pad on your abdomen or soak in a hot bath

- Massage your lower abdomen
- Take 600mg of ibuprofen every 6 hours and if that doesn't reduce your discomfort add 2 extra-strength acetaminophen every 6 hours.

When to call:

- Severe cramping doesn't get better after trying the above measures
- Pain other than cramping that is intolerable

TEMPERATURE: normal body temperature is 98.6 degrees F., plus or minus one degree

What's normal:

- Temperature of 98.6, plus or minus one degree
- A brief rise in temperature (less than 100 degrees F.) within 24 hours is not unusual, should return to normal in a few hours

When to call:

- Temperature of 100.4 or higher that lasts more than four hours
- Normal temperature but having flu-like symptoms or feeling generally unwell, foul-smelling vaginal discharge, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, weakness or dizziness

PREGNANCY SYMPTOMS: nausea, fatigue, breast enlargement and tenderness are common in early pregnancy because of hormone changes

What's normal:

- Nausea gets better in 24-72 hours
- Breast tenderness and enlargement goes away in one to two weeks

When to call:

- Pregnancy symptoms not better in a week

EMOTIONAL SYMPTOMS: as pregnancy hormones diminish, emotional changes may occur

What's normal:

- Feeling relieved, positive, and happy to get back to normal activities
- Feeling sad, mildly depressed or moody for a week or so

What you can do:

- Talk to supportive friends or family members, write your feelings in a journal, do things that you find enjoyable, talk to a counselor, clergy person or other trusted advisor

When to call:

- Trouble sleeping or sleeping too much; loss of appetite,; loss of interest in activities; crying a lot; severe persistent feelings of guilt, sadness, or anger; anything that interferes with your daily life and doesn't get better in several weeks

We want you to call our office two weeks post abortion to check in and let us know how your healing process is going. While a follow-up visit isn't usually necessary after your abortion, we do want you to take a pregnancy test 3 weeks after your abortion. At your 2-week check-in phone call let us know if you want to have a free pregnancy test at our office. We also recommend you be seen at our office for a free 3 week post-abortion check up if:

- You are not sure that your recovery has been normal or complete
- You want help with your birth control plan
- You have any physical or emotional concerns after the abortion that you want to discuss