

Using Mifepristone and Misoprostol for **SELF-MANAGED ABORTION**

For a pregnancy that is up to 10 weeks, the recommendation for people who want to manage their abortion via mifepristone plus misoprostol is to use 1 tablet of mifepristone (200 mg) and 4 tablets of misoprostol (200 mcg each) over the course of two days. The protocol is summarized in the following steps:



- 1. Swallow one tablet of mifepristone (200 mg) with a glass of water. Normal eating and drinking for the rest of the day.**
- 2. 24 hours later, place four tablets of misoprostol (200 mcg each) in the cheek between the gum and the lower teeth, two on each side. (Two tablets should be placed between the gum and the cheek on the left side and two tablets between the gum and the cheek on the right side.)**
- 3. Allow all four pills to dissolve for 30 minutes. Do not eat or drink anything during this time. Saliva can be swallowed. Swallow any remnant of the pills after 30 minutes.**

The treatment of complications of abortion with pills is exactly the same as the treatment for complications of miscarriage. There is no test that can detect either mifepristone or misoprostol within a few hours after they are used, and there is no reason to tell a medical provider that a woman has managed her own abortion with pills. To date, there have been at least 20 arrests of women who have ended their own pregnancy outside a medical setting in the United States. A woman, therefore, should not tell medical personnel that she has taken either drug or she may be at legal risk.

After a woman takes the medication it is normal for her to feel heavy cramping and bleeding for several hours. Most of the bleeding will stop by the next day, but some light bleeding may continue for up to 2 or 3 weeks. Common side effects include: nausea, mild fever, chills, headaches, and diarrhea, which may occur for several hours. Though rare, complications can occur. Signs of complications include:

- Heavy bleeding that lasts for more than two hours and soaks more than two sanitary pads per hour
- Severe abdominal pain that does not go away after taking painkillers or continues for 2-3 days
- A fever of over 102 degrees Fahrenheit or a fever of over 100 degrees Fahrenheit for more than 24 hours
- Vaginal discharge that is an unusual greenish or yellowish color, and/or has a strong unpleasant odor

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For more information and the WHO protocols on self-managed abortion using misoprostol alone, see our other fact sheets available on our website.