



Risks of an abortion

Abortions are generally very safe. Most women will not experience any problems.

But like any medical treatment, there is a small risk that something could go wrong.

Possible complications

The risk of complications increases the later in pregnancy you have an abortion.

Possible complications include:

- the pregnancy is not completely removed
- infection of the womb
- haemorrhage or very heavy bleeding during the abortion
- heavy or irregular bleeding after the abortion
- mental health problems such as feeling down or upset
- continuing pregnancy

If complications do happen, you may need further treatment, including surgery.

Effect on fertility and future pregnancies

Having an abortion will not affect your chances of becoming pregnant. You should be able to have normal pregnancies in the future.

Abortion does not increase your risk of:

- miscarriage (Link: <https://www2.hse.ie/conditions/miscarriage/>)
- ectopic pregnancy (Link: <https://www2.hse.ie/conditions/ectopic-pregnancy/>)
- problems with the placenta (afterbirth)

Many women are able to get pregnant immediately afterwards. Start using contraception (Link: <https://www.sexualwellbeing.ie/sexual-health/contraception/>) right away if you do not want this to happen.

Talk to your GP or doctor if you're concerned about the risks of an abortion.

Physical side effects after an abortion (Link: <https://www2.hse.ie/conditions/abortion/after/physical-side-effects/>)

Mental health effects

You may have a range of emotions after you have an abortion.

If you need to, you can talk to a counsellor for free about how you're feeling.

Call the My Options helpline on Freephone: 1800 828 010 (Link: <tel:1800828010>).

You are not more likely to have a mental health problem if you have an abortion. You are just as likely to have a mental health problem if you continued with the pregnancy.

You can also talk to your GP if you have any concerns.

Emotional side effects after an abortion (Link: <https://www2.hse.ie/conditions/abortion/after/emotional-side-effects/>)

Breast cancer

An abortion does not increase your risk of developing breast cancer.

More information

Learn more about the possible complications of:

- medical abortion (Link: <https://www2.hse.ie/conditions/abortion/methods/medical/#medical-abortion-risks-and-complications>)

- surgical abortion (Link: <https://www2.hse.ie/conditions/abortion/methods/surgical/#risks-and-complications>)

More in **How to get an abortion** (Link: </conditions/abortion/how-to-get/>)

When you can have an abortion (Link: </conditions/abortion/how-to-get/when/>)

Deciding to have an abortion (Link: </conditions/abortion/how-to-get/deciding/>)

Where to go for an abortion (Link: </conditions/abortion/how-to-get/where-to-go/>)

Hospitals providing abortion services (Link: </conditions/abortion/how-to-get/in-hospital/>)

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