

abortion

Planned Parenthood Toronto (PPT) is a pro-choice organization. When you are pregnant, we believe that you have the right to access factual, caring and non-judgmental information and services on all three of your options: abortion, adoption, and parenting. If you need support with decision making, contact PPT to book an appointment.

There are many myths about abortion. Below is some information about abortion and abortion services in Toronto.

What is an abortion?

- An abortion is a safe medical procedure that ends a pregnancy.
- Abortions are fully legal in Canada.

Types of abortion

There are 2 categories of abortion: surgical and medical.

The options you have for abortion depend on how long you have been pregnant (gestational age, or GA) and the clinic/hospital where you go. GA is calculated by how long it has been since the first day of your last menstrual* period.

Medical abortion (includes the abortion pill)

- A medical abortion uses medication to stop the growth of a pregnancy and then expel the pregnancy tissue from the uterus*.
- This type of abortion is done in pregnancies up to 7 or 9 weeks GA, depending on clinic and the type of medication used.
- To get a medical abortion, you make an appointment at a clinic that offers it (see chart, pg. 7). You have a counselling session, ultrasound and STI test. At the clinic you get an injection (to stop the pregnancy from growing) or take a pill (to detach the pregnancy from the wall of the uterus), and later take tablets at home to make your uterus contract to expel the pregnancy tissue.
- Pregnancy tissue usually expels within 24hrs after you take the tablets at home, but in some cases may take days or weeks to finish expelling. Different medications are more or less likely to finish the process quickly. You may need follow up blood tests or visits until the tissue is expelled or if any concerns arise.

**We know that these aren't the words everyone uses for their bodies (eg. trans folks), and support you using the language that feels best for you.*

for youth ages 13-29

planned parenthood toronto health services

offers drop-in and scheduled appointments.
call 416-961-0113 or visit www.ppt.on.ca

for youth ages 13-19

teen health source

offers anonymous/confidential sexual health info for teens and by teens.
text: 647-933-5300, call 416-961-3200, email: teenhealthsource@ppt.on.ca
chat online and visit www.teenhealthsource.com



planned
parenthood
toronto

choice is yours.

Differences in medical abortions by medication:

	Methotrexate and Misoprostol	Mifepristone and Misoprostol (the abortion pill, Mifegymiso)
how far along in pregnancy (GA)	up to 7 weeks	up to 9 weeks
how you take it	injection at clinic, tablets inserted into vagina 3-5 days later	pill taken at clinic, then tablets melted between gums and cheek 24-48 hours later
& finished within 24hrs of tablets	65%	90%
cost	Free with Ontario health card; \$300 without one	about \$300-350

Differences in surgical abortion procedures by location:

	manual surgical abortion at BCBC	surgical abortion in hospital	surgical abortion in freestanding clinic in Toronto
how far along in pregnancy (GA)	up to 8 wks	4 wks to 14 wks + 3 days	4 to 22.5 wks
intake appointment	at the BCBC	at the BCBC	at freestanding clinic
procedure same day as intake appointment?	abortion procedures are done on specific days of the week when an operating room is reserved these may or may not be the same day as intake	abortion procedure on another day at a hospital in downtown Toronto some health conditions may require an additional appointment	for earlier pregnancies you can usually have the abortion procedure the same day
suction	suction provided manually by a syringe connected to a flexible plastic tube	suction provided by a small machine	suction provided by a syringe or a small machine depending on GA & clinic
anesthetic & medication	local anesthetic & oral pain/ relaxation medication (you are awake for the procedure)	general anesthetic (you are asleep/ unconscious for the procedure)	local anesthetic, intravenous (conscious) sedation, and pain medication (you are awake for the procedure)

- For hospital procedures past 14 weeks, 3 days GA and up to 24 weeks GA, London Health Sciences Centre Pregnancy Options Program in London, Ontario (519-685-8204) may be able to assist.
- Abortions past 24 weeks GA may require travel to the U.S. The National Abortion Federation (1-877-257-0012, www.prochoice.org) can help with referrals and sometimes costs.

for youth ages 13-29
planned parenthood toronto health services
 offers drop-in and scheduled appointments.
 call 416-961-0113 or visit www.ppt.on.ca

for youth ages 13-19
teen health source
 offers anonymous/confidential sexual health info for teens and by teens.
 text: 647-933-5300, call 416-961-3200, email: teenhealthsource@ppt.on.ca
 chat online and visit www.teenhealthsource.com

 **planned parenthood toronto**
choice is yours.

Surgical abortion

- To get a surgical abortion you have a 2-3 hour long intake appointment that includes a counselling/education session, ultrasound, and test for sexually transmitted infections (STIs). Depending on the clinic/hospital and gestational age (GA) you may be able to have the abortion procedure in the same appointment.
- There is no cutting and no stitches are needed.
- The cervix is gently opened with medication and/or medical instruments. A flexible tube providing gentle suction and/or other instruments are inserted through the cervix and used to remove the pregnancy tissue from the uterus. This can take 2-15 minutes.
- For pregnancies more than 12 weeks GA, you may take medication or have laminaria (sterilized compressed seaweed sticks) inserted into your cervix to make opening your cervix for the abortion easier. These take time to work, so you may return to the clinic/ hospital the next day for the abortion procedure.
- For pregnancies of more than 19 weeks GA, you may return the next day for more medication/ laminaria to continue opening your cervix and return on a third day for the abortion procedure.
- After the abortion procedure you stay in a recovery area until the medical staff are confident you can go home safely.
- You cannot drive yourself home after an abortion.

How much does an abortion cost?

- If you have a valid Ontario health card (Ontario Health Insurance Plan/OHIP), injection medical abortions and surgical abortions at freestanding clinics and hospitals are fully covered .
- If you have a University Health Insurance Plan (UHIP), Interim Federal Health (IFH), or Canadian Military Insurance (DND) abortions are covered, but you may have to pay up front and get reimbursed.
- If you have a private insurance plan check with your provider if they cover abortions. If they do, you may have to pay up front and get reimbursed.
- If you have a valid health card from another Canadian province and you go to a freestanding clinic, you will have to pay for your abortion on the day of the procedure, but you may be able to get part or all of the money reimbursed by your province. Call the province's health insurance plan office to find out if your province gives reimbursement for out-of-province abortions and ask the clinic or hospital for the documents you need to submit.
- Some clinics have administrative fees on top of what's covered by health cards or other insurance (see chart, pg. 7).
- Without insurance, costs at freestanding clinics range from \$300-\$2300 depending on the gestational age (GA), clinic, and procedure. The average earlier procedure costs around \$300-\$500 plus any admin fees.
- You may have to pay for the medication for a medical abortion (injection: \$200-\$300; pill: \$300-\$460) if you don't have insurance that covers it. OHIP covers the injection but not the pill.

for youth ages 13-29

planned parenthood toronto health services

offers drop-in and scheduled appointments.
call 416-961-0113 or visit www.ppt.on.ca

for youth ages 13-19

teen health source

offers anonymous/confidential sexual health info for teens and by teens.
text: 647-933-5300, call 416-961-3200, email: teenhealthsource@ppt.on.ca
chat online and visit www.teenhealthsource.com



**planned
parenthood
toronto**

choice is yours.

- If you want a hospital procedure, contact the BCBC (416-351-3700) (up to 14 weeks, 3 days GA) or the London Health Sciences Centre Pregnancy Options Program (519-685-8204) (up to 24 weeks GA) for more info about costs and funding without OHIP.
- Some clinics have funds to help pay for abortions—call the freestanding clinics or PPT for more information. If you are getting this kind of funding you may still have to pay administrative fees.
- If you need to travel to get an abortion, Action Canada for Sexual Health and Rights (<http://www.sexualhealthandrights.ca>, 1-888-642-2725), or the National Abortion Federation (1-877-257-0012, www.prochoice.org) can sometimes help with costs.
- You can call the individual clinics to confirm their fees and policies before booking with them.

After an abortion

Instructions about abortion aftercare vary between providers. Here is some general information about caring for yourself after an abortion:

- For 1-2 weeks after an abortion (1-2 weeks after pregnancy tissue expels for medical abortions), you can reduce risk of infection by:
 - o not inserting anything into your vagina, including fingers, toys, penises, tampons, menstrual cups, or douches
 - o not sitting in water: ie. not taking baths (shower instead), not going swimming, not using hot tubs or Jacuzzis
- **Signs of infection** can include fever, lower abdominal tenderness and vaginal discharge. If you have any of these symptoms, contact your doctor or clinic. Infections that are detected early can be treated easily and effectively with antibiotics.
- **Resuming normal activity:** Avoid heavy lifting or aerobic activity for 24 hours after the abortion (with a medical abortion, for 24 hours after you expel the pregnancy tissue). While some people return to work the same day as their abortion (or the same day they expel the pregnancy tissue), others may need to rest. Return to normal activities when you feel ready - listen to your body.
- **Next Menstrual Period:** Unless you are using hormonal birth control, your next period will start 4-6 weeks after the abortion.
- **Cramping** after an abortion is normal. Some people do not get cramps at all. You may have cramps off and on for 2-3 weeks after the procedure. You may feel pressure or pain in your lower abdomen, lower back or inner thighs. You can use a hot water bottle or ask a clinician about using Advil or Tylenol.
- **Bleeding** after an abortion is normal. Some people start bleeding after the abortion and continue bleeding or have brown spotting for up to 3 weeks. Drinking alcohol, lifting heavy objects, using marijuana or “period” medications such as Midol or Anaprox may increase bleeding. If you soak through several maxi pads in one hour, or soak through one maxi pad per hour for more than 3 hours, call your clinician or clinic immediately.
- **Symptoms of pregnancy** will end a week or so following the abortion. Nausea is usually the first symptom to end.

for youth ages 13-29

planned parenthood toronto health services

offers drop-in and scheduled appointments.
call 416-961-0113 or visit www.ppt.on.ca

for youth ages 13-19

teen health source

offers anonymous/confidential sexual health info for teens and by teens.
text: 647-933-5300, call 416-961-3200, email: teenhealthsource@ppt.on.ca
chat online and visit www.teenhealthsource.com



planned
parenthood
toronto

choice is yours.

• **Post-abortion checkup:** Most providers recommend a checkup 2-3 weeks after a surgical abortion, or for a medical abortion, 1-2 weeks after the pregnancy tissue has been expelled. You can do this at the abortion clinic, a family doctor, PPT, or the BCBC.

Frequently asked questions about abortion

Will the abortion hurt?

Everyone has a different experience. Most people get menstrual-like cramps but some have no pain at all. Some people who are awake for the abortion may feel pressure during the procedure. Medication is used to reduce discomfort and help you relax.

Will I be able to have a baby in the future?

Yes. Having an abortion will not prevent you from getting pregnant and having a healthy pregnancy in the future.

Will anybody find out?

No. This medical information cannot be released to anyone but you. No one needs to know unless you wish to tell them. After 2-3 weeks' time, a doctor or healthcare provider will not be able to tell, even through a vaginal exam, that you've had an abortion.

Do my parents/partner/ family doctor have to give permission?

No. In Canada, anyone over 12 years of age can legally have an abortion in a clinic or hospital. You do not need the consent or permission of your parents, partner or your family doctor.

Do I have to take time off work or school?

You may have to take time off for the appointment(s). Depending on how long you have been pregnant and where you go, you are usually in the clinic or hospital for 2-4 hours. Some people choose to take a day or two off to rest and take care of themselves, but others return to their usual activities immediately or the following day.

Does abortion make me more likely to get breast* cancer?

No. There is no link between having an abortion or multiple abortions and developing breast cancer in the future.

How long will the abortion take?

For most surgical procedures, the abortion itself takes less than 15 minutes. However, expect to be in the clinic or hospital for 2-4 hours.

Does abortion cause depression?

No. The most common feeling people report after having an abortion is relief. Some people may feel sadness or grief, which is a healthy response to loss. Having an abortion is not associated with long-term emotional or mental health problems.

for youth ages 13-29
planned parenthood toronto health services
offers drop-in and scheduled appointments.
call 416-961-0113 or visit www.ppt.on.ca

for youth ages 13-19
teen health source
offers anonymous/confidential sexual health info for teens and by teens.
text: 647-933-5300, call 416-961-3200, email: teenhealthsource@ppt.on.ca
chat online and visit www.teenhealthsource.com

 **planned
parenthood
toronto**
choice is yours.

Talking about abortion/ support around abortion

Not everybody needs support or has strong feelings about their abortion, but some people do, and being pregnant when you can't or don't want to continue a pregnancy can be stressful.

Some people find it helpful to talk to friends, family, community, or other supports in their lives, but not everyone has people they can talk to about it without fear of judgment or shame.

If you would like to talk to someone pro-choice and nonjudgmental about pregnancy options, abortion, or your feelings or experiences around pregnancy or abortion, check out these resources:

- PPT's Health Services volunteers: in-person education, information, and active listening on all pregnancy options and a range of sexual health issues.
- To see a counsellor for more in-depth pre- or post-abortion support, contact PPT, the BCBC (416-351-3700), or some freestanding abortion clinics.
- Teen Health Source: education, information, and active listening on all pregnancy options and a range of sexual health issues by phone, text, email, or chat (contact info below).
- Backline (1-888-493-0092, toll-free): nonjudgmental peer support for decisions/feelings/experiences with pregnancy, parenting, adoption and abortion.
- Faith Aloud (1-888-717-5010, toll-free): nonjudgmental support from trained clergy and religious counselors for considering pregnancy options or talking about an abortion experience.
- wetestify.org: dedicated to increasing the spectrum & building the power of abortion storytellers in the public sphere, especially those who are marginalized.

for youth ages 13-29

planned parenthood toronto health services

offers drop-in and scheduled appointments.
call 416-961-0113 or visit www.ppt.on.ca

for youth ages 13-19

teen health source

offers anonymous/confidential sexual health info for teens and by teens.
text: 647-933-5300, call 416-961-3200, email: teenhealthsource@ppt.on.ca
chat online and visit www.teenhealthsource.com



**planned
parenthood
toronto**

choice is yours.

List of abortion providers in/near Toronto (as of July 2017)

<p>Choice in Health 301 – 1678 Bloor St W (Bloor & Keele) 416-975-9300/1-866-565-9300 choiceinhealth.ca Surgical: up to 15 wks GA (limited availability without OHIP) Medical (injection): up to 7 wks GA (OHIP clients only) No admin fees</p>	<p>Cabbagetown Clinic 302 Gerrard St E (Gerrard & Parliament) 416-323-0642 cabbagetownwomensclinic.com Surgical: up to 22.5 wks GA Medical: not offered No admin fees <i>*requires parental consent for clients under 16</i></p>
<p>The Morgentaler Clinic 727 Hillside Ave E (Bayview & Eglinton) 416-932-0446/1-800-556-6835 morgentaler.ca Surgical: up to 19 wks GA Medical: not offered No admin fees</p>	<p>Bloor West Village Women's Clinic 403 – 2425 Bloor St W (Bloor & Jane) 416-849-4595 bloorwestwomensclinic.com Surgical: up to 19 wks 6d GA Medical (injection): up to 7 wks GA Medical (pill): up to 9 wks GA Admin fees: \$60 - \$400</p>
<p>Women's Care Clinic 501 – 960 Lawrence Ave W (Dufferin & Lawrence) 416-256-4139 womenscareclinic.ca Surgical: up to 19 wks 6d GA Medical (pill): up to 7 wks GA Admin fees: \$100-\$300</p>	<p>Dr. Kathy Chu 200-1371 Neilson Rd (Neilson & Sheppard) 416-284-0888 Surgical: up to 8 wks GA Medical: not offered Admin fees: \$40</p>
<p>Mississauga Woman's Clinic 101 Queensway W, Suite 401 (Queensway & Hurontario) 905-629-4516 mwclinic.com Surgical: up to 16 wks GA Medical: not offered Admin fees: \$60 - \$120</p>	<p>Brampton Women's Clinic 2250 Bovaird Dr E, Suite 602 (Torbram & Bovaird) 905-789-7474 bramptonwomensclinic.com Surgical: up to 18.5 wks GA Medical: expected Aug 2017 Admin fees: \$60 - \$200</p>
<p>Bay Centre for Birth Control (BCBC) 76 Grenville St, 3rd floor in Women's College Hospital (Bay & College) 416-351-3700 Manual Surgical: up to 8 wks GA Medical (pill): up to 9 wks GA Medical (injection): up to 7 wks GA Assessments for surgical in hospital: up to 14.5 wks GA No admin fees</p>	

for youth ages 13-29
planned parenthood toronto health services
offers drop-in and scheduled appointments.
call 416-961-0113 or visit www.ppt.on.ca

for youth ages 13-19
teen health source
offers anonymous/confidential sexual health info for teens and by teens.
text: 647-933-5300, call 416-961-3200, email: teenhealthsource@ppt.on.ca
chat online and visit www.teenhealthsource.com

 **planned
parenthood
toronto**
choice is yours.