



Allentown Women's Center • toll free 877-342-5292

Abortion After-care Instructions

After your procedure

After your procedure, you may eat or drink as soon as you feel up to it. You may return to normal activities, but you should not "overdo it". Avoid strenuous activities and heavy lifting. Listen to your body; you know it best! Please avoid heavy lifting (over 25 lbs.) for at least one week. Be aware that the more active you are, the more bleeding or cramping you may experience. The staff can give you a medical excuse for work or school, if necessary.

Call us first if you have a problem: 877-342-5292

Call any time 24 hours a day, 7 days a week for post abortion problems. Post-abortion problems are rare but require prompt medical attention. We are available 24 hours a day to address your concerns. If you receive additional care in our office, prior to your follow-up appointment, these services may be provided with no fee or billed to your insurance.

Please be sure to consult us first before going to an emergency room, where you may receive unnecessary and expensive treatment.

Call during office hours for birth control information, scheduling appointments, emergency contraception and other questions.

What is Normal Bleeding?

Bleeding varies from woman to woman. You may bleed for *two days to 4 weeks or have no bleeding at all.* For many women, the bleeding stops and starts sporadically. There may be spotting until your next period. You may also find that you are passing large blood clots and have mild to moderate or even heavy cramping. All of this can be normal.

What is Problem Bleeding?

Problem bleeding is filling more than 2 maxi-pads (saturated) in an hour, for two or more hours in a row. Remember that bleeding can seem heavier if you are passing clots. Bleeding heavily for more than two weeks is also considered problem bleeding. If you are also feeling lightheaded, dizzy, weak, or are having the sensation of heart palpitations, please contact us. *Call us if you are experiencing problem bleeding.*

Cramps and Pain Medication

We encourage you to take pain medication at the *first sign* of cramps to control unnecessary pain. For your convenience, AWC offers prescription strength Ibuprofen at a very low price. Ask any staff member if you are interested in purchasing this medication. You should take *Ibuprofen* (like *Advil*, *Motrin IB*, etc.) up to 800 mg every 6 to 8 hours. *Extra Strength Tylenol* (acetaminophen 1000 mg) every 4-6 hours can be substituted. Do not exceed 3200mg of acetaminophen in 24 hours. Do not take aspirin or any aspirin based medications. Pain may also be relieved by placing a heating pad over the lower abdomen or lower back. A hot shower or massage of the lower abdomen may also be helpful. Please call us if these things do not help. *Call us if your cramps are unrelieved by Ibuprofen or if you have any sharp, shooting or sudden pain that makes you 'double over.'*

Look on the back of this form for important instructions to prevent post-abortion infection. → → →

Infection Precautions: Do's and Don'ts

Because the cervix has been opened (dilated) you are at risk for uterine infection. We want you to take some precautions for the next two weeks:

- Do monitor your temperature. If you don't have a thermometer please pick one up at the pharmacy. If you are feeling feverish, take your temperature. If your temperature is 100.4° F (38° C) or more, you can treat your fever by making sure you're drinking plenty of fluids, and you can also take Tylenol 1000mg. If after treating your fever your temperature doesn't return to your normal or you experience chills and/or abdominal tenderness, call us immediately.
- Do take the antibiotics we give you. Take them with food.
- Do keep your follow-up exam.
- Do not put anything into your vagina for one week.
- Do not have intercourse for the next 7 days.
- Don't use tampons for the next 7 days.
- Don't take tub baths, douche, or go swimming for the next week.

Your First Menstrual Period

If you are not beginning a hormonal birth control regimen, your first normal period should begin in 4-8 weeks. The first period may be heavier or last longer than you are used to. If you have been given hormonal birth control, you may have bleeding off and on or your period may not come at all. *Call us if you do not get a period within eight weeks following your procedure.*

Preventing Another Pregnancy

Keep in mind that it is possible to get pregnant immediately, so follow-up on your birth control plan. Avoid intercourse for 2 weeks after your abortion. The pregnancy hormone, HCG, can remain in your system for up to 8 weeks after an abortion. Therefore, it is recommended that you do not perform a pregnancy test immediately after your procedure, unless advised by the physician to do so. If you are going to use the birth control pill, patch, or NuvaRing, begin taking it on the Sunday after the abortion. (If you do not start on that day, you will need to use a back up method.) You will get your period during the reminder pills or during the last week of the cycle. Continue using them according to the instructions.

Keep Your Follow-up Exam

Have an appointment here, or with your own doctor or clinic, 3-4 weeks from your abortion appointment. There is usually no charge for follow-up care here. If you are not returning here, you will receive a summary of your records. In that case, please make sure that you have received a follow up form from the Recovery Room Nurse for your caregiver to complete. A follow-up exam is very important to be sure you are completely healed and no longer pregnant. *Keep your appointment whether or not you are still bleeding.*

Emotional Aftercare

Ending a pregnancy is an important decision and it is normal to have many feelings about it. If you find that you cannot seem to get back to your normal activities, feel sad, guilty, or are having trouble coping with your decision, you may need further help. We can offer advice and referrals by appointment or over the phone. Support for you throughout your decision is very important. There are also three talk lines that may be helpful: Backline 888-493-0092; Exhale 866-439-4253; and Faith Aloud 888-717-5010.

Remember: Call us first if you have a problem at 877-342-5292 • All Women Count at AWC