MAVEN CENTRE
ADVANCED GYNAECOLOGY & WOMEN'S HEALTH

Suite 5.3, Level 5,
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Medical Termination of Pregnancy (MToP): patient information

What is a medical termination (aka. a medical abortion)?

A medical termination of pregnancy (or 'MToP') is a safe and effective method of ending an early pregnancy using tablets rather than surgery.

Before your medical termination

You will require some tests prior to your medical termination; these can be performed by a Maven Centre women's health GP or gynaecologist, or your chosen GP if they are confident to assist.

- **Ultrasound scan** to confirm the pregnancy is in the uterus and less than 63 days (9 weeks) gestation
- **Blood tests** for pregnancy hormone levels ('BhCG') and consideration of other blood tests
- **Sexual health screening** to check for infections

How MToP is performed

There are 2 steps in this process:

- **1st step: mifepristone**
  - Take one tablet of mifepristone (a pregnancy hormone blocker)
  - Most people do not feel anything after taking this tablet; some have vaginal bleeding and / or cramps
- **2nd step: misoprostol**
  - 36 – 48 hours after you took mifepristone, take 4 misoprostol tablets
  - Put the misoprostol tablets into the pouch between your lower gum and cheek, and leave them to dissolve
  - After 30 minutes, have a glass of water to swallow the remnants

Between 30mins and 48 hours after taking the misoprostol tablets, you will probably experience:

- Cramps in your uterus
- Vaginal bleeding
- Passage of pregnancy tissue

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What to expect during MToP

Vaginal bleeding

- Vaginal bleeding will probably be heavier than your normal menstrual period
- Bleeding usually lasts 10 - 16 days, but can last up to 4 weeks

Cramping pain

- Cramping pains are normal and range from mild to strong
- Cramps should improve after the pregnancy is passed
- Use tummy massage and a heat pack for pain relief
- Pain medication will be offered to take home with you to relieve pain

Other possible symptoms / side-effects include:

- Headache
- Breast tenderness
- Dizziness and / or fainting
- Hot flushes, skin rash, itching
- Nausea, vomiting, diarrhoea
- Short-lived fever and / or chills

After your MToP

Follow-up is essential, to confirm that your termination is complete.

- Use the pathology blood forms provided to perform a repeat blood test one week after the misoprostol medication.
- You should not have insertive sex for one week after the medication.
- Review with your doctor two weeks after the MToP, to discuss results and contraceptive options

You will likely get your next period 4 - 8 weeks after your MToP, but discuss with us if this does not happen.

It is important you use contraception following your MToP – see below.

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Risks of MToP

Medical termination is very safe, but (as with all medical treatments) there are some risks:

- **Continuing pregnancy:** there is a 1% chance the medical termination doesn't work, and the pregnancy continues to grow. If the pregnancy continues, the medications used can cause damage to a developing fetus. This situation requires a surgical procedure.
- **'Retained products':** there is 4% chance of tissue or blood remaining in the uterus, which is called 'retained products of conception'. This can cause heavy or ongoing bleeding, and may require further medical or surgical treatment.
- **Haemorrhage:** 1 in 1000 patients require blood transfusion for excessive and / or prolonged bleeding.
- **Infection:** is rare, but bacteria can potentially enter the body during termination. If you have persistent pain, fever, or feel unwell, please report this to your doctor.
- **Emotional effects:** everyone has different feelings about their termination. If at any time you would like to speak to someone about your abortion, please see us or your regular GP.

Contraception options

Within 2 weeks of treatment, your body can release an egg, and you can become pregnant again (even before your next period occurs). Please discuss future contraceptive options with your Maven Centre doctor: you may want to consider a so-called long-acting reversible contraceptive (such as an intrauterine device or subdermal implant).

When to seek medical advice

Please contact your Maven Centre doctor or go to your local Emergency Department if you notice any of the following:

- Severe bleeding, such as: saturating two pads / hour for ≥ two hours; passing clots the size of a tennis ball (or larger); prolonged heavy bleeding (that lasts longer than two weeks)
- Severe cramps, that are: not improving with pain relief medications; lasting more than 24 hours
- A temperature at or above 38°C
- An abnormally smelly vaginal discharge
- Worsening nausea and / or vomiting

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Frequently asked questions

When can I go back to work?

You will usually need to rest at home after taking the misoprostol (second step medication), until the cramps and bleeding have reduced (usually 1 - 2 days).

You can obtain a medical certificate for this timeframe at your appointment.

When can I have sex again?

To reduce the risk of infection after your medical termination, please don't have insertive sex for a week after your procedure.

When can I use tampons again?

Use sanitary pads (rather than tampons or a menstrual cup) up until your next period. This helps to reduce the risk of infection. You can start to use tampons again during your next period, if you want to.

Will there be any impact on future pregnancies?

MToP should not affect your chance of becoming pregnant in the future, nor have any impact on future fetuses or children.

This pamphlet is a general overview of medical termination, and may not apply to everyone. If you have any further questions, please speak to your doctor.