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| Abortion |
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## Abortion (or ‘termination of pregnancy’) is when a pregnancy is intentionally ended.

* Abortion is legal in Victoria.
* There are two types of abortion: **surgical** and **medication**. Both types are safe and reliable.
* In Victoria, you can have a medication abortion up to nine weeks of pregnancy (‘gestation’). You can have a surgical abortion from around six weeks of pregnancy onwards.
* There are safe access zones up to 150 metres around abortion clinics in Victoria. This means you can enter or leave the clinic without anyone trying to bother you.
* A doctor who does not want to perform an abortion must refer you to another doctor who does not object to providing abortion information and services.
* Serious complications of abortion are very rare. If you are worried about your health after an abortion, seek medical assistance.
* If you are thinking about having an abortion and would like information about abortion and the services available in Victoria, you can search: 1800myoptions.org.au or call 1800MyOptions on 1800 696 784

### Comparing medical and surgical abortion

|  | Medication abortion | Surgical abortion |
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| **What type of procedure is it?** | * Non-surgical, similar to having a miscarriage * Tablets are taken for this procedure | * A surgical procedure, usually with some form of anaesthetic |
| **How effective is it?** | * 95 to 98 per cent successful * Around two to five per cent of women will need additional tablets or a small surgical procedure to complete the abortion | * 98 per cent successful |
| **What health services provide it?** | Check 1800 MyOptions.org.au  Options include:   * General practitioners * Community health services * Private abortion clinics and hospitals * Public hospitals * Via ‘telehealth’, which is a consultation by phone, with pregnancy confirmation tests done locally | Check 1800MyOptions.org.au  Options may include:   * Public hospitals * Private hospitals * Private day clinics |
| **Where does it take place?** | The medical consultation is at a clinic or via telehealth (over the phone) and the abortion takes place at home or in a similar environment. | In a hospital or day surgery unit |
| **How long does it take?** | Following the first tablet, the second is taken 24 to 48 hours later, and the abortion will occur four to six hours after that, on average | Typically up to 15 minutes for the procedure, plus preparation and recovery time lasting a few hours |
| **At what stage of a pregnancy is it done?** | From when a pregnancy can be seen in an ultrasound, and up to nine weeks gestation | Safest and most commonly done between 6 and 12 weeks  Less common (and fewer services offer it) during the later stages of pregnancy |
| **Is there bleeding?** | Bleeding can last on average 10 to 16 days | Bleeding varies between women and can be light or heavier  It may continue for some weeks and can be uunpredictable and irregular |
| **What is the cost?** | Contact the service provider for information about cost | Contact the service provider for information about cost |
| **When can contraception be started?** | Most forms of contraception can be started either straight away or soon after a medication abortion | Most forms of contraception can be started on the same day as a surgical abortion |

## More Information

This fact sheet is one of three fact sheets about abortion on the Health Translations Directory. Please also see:

* Abortion procedure – medication
* Abortion procedure - surgical

## Where to get help

* [1800 my options](https://www.1800myoptions.org.au/)  Tel. [1800 696 784](tel:1800696784) Interpreter 131450
* Your GP
* [Family Planning Victoria](http://www.fpv.org.au/for-you/abortion/abortion-overview) Tel. (03) 9257 0100 or freecall 1800 013 952
* Community health service: <https://www2.health.vic.gov.au/primary-and-community-health/community-health/community-health-directory>
* [Pregnancy, Birth and Baby Helpline](https://www.pregnancybirthbaby.org.au/) 1800 882 436

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