

INFORMED CONSENT FORM FOR MEDICAL ABORTION OF PREGNANCIES OVER 12 WEEKS IN DURATION ON MEDICAL GROUNDS

Pregnancy termination in Estonia is regulated by the "Pregnancy Termination and Sterilisation Act", which was passed on 25.11.1998. The last amendment was made in 2019. This act constitutes the legal basis for this informed consent form.

This consent form is to be signed in duplicate. One copy is retained by the patient and one by the healthcare institution.

You are about to terminate your pregnancy on medical grounds. Sometimes the need for this may arise when the pregnancy has lasted more than 12 weeks. The termination of the pregnancy will take place in hospital.

Two different drugs are used for terminating pregnancy:

1) Mifepristone

and

2) Misoprostol, which is administered in hospital 24-48 hours after mifepristone has been taken.

Mifepristone blocks the hormone (progesterone) necessary for maintaining the pregnancy and Misoprostol induces contractions of the uterus. The drug will be provided by the healthcare institution.

How to take Mifepristone:

1 tablet (200 mg) orally on (date) (time).

After taking Mifepristone:

- You will typically not feel any different and can continue with your everyday activities.
- If you vomit within 2 hours of taking the pill, the drug may not have been absorbed. You should contact the healthcare institution to determine whether you need to take a new tablet.
- You may experience lower abdominal pain and a small amount of menstrual bleeding and therefore we recommend using a sanitary pad. Very rarely (0.2 – 0.4%) the pregnancy may terminate before taking Misoprostol. If you experience heavier bleeding and pain after taking Mifepristone, then you should contact the healthcare institution before your next scheduled appointment.

Termination of pregnancy in a healthcare institution

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(healthcare institution, department, date of visit)

Misoprostol is administered in hospital – the tablets are placed in your vagina, under your tongue or in your mouth between your gums and cheek, where they are slowly absorbed. The drug may be administered repeatedly as necessary.

After taking Misoprostol:

- Misoprostol causes contractions of the uterus, which causes pain similar to period pain, but pain in the lower abdomen may become intense just before the pregnancy terminates. Therefore you will also be given pain killers (Ibuprofen, Paracetamol and others). It is also possible to apply cervical pain relief or administer epidural analgesia.
- During the first few hours after taking the drug you may feel nauseous, you may vomit, you may experience chills, a short-lived fever, headache and diarrhoea. Rarely dizziness or chest pain may be experienced – you should inform medical staff of this.
- On average it takes 6-8 hours from the start of taking Misoprostol to the termination of the pregnancy. In most cases (ca. 95%) the pregnancy will terminate within 24 hours, but sometimes it may take longer.
- The termination of pregnancy is accompanied by menstrual bleeding that is often heavier than during normal menstruation. Usually the fetus is expelled through the vagina and is then followed quite quickly by the placenta – in more than half of cases the placenta is expelled within one hour. If necessary, drugs will be administered to assist with the expulsion of the placenta. On rare occasions it may be necessary to remove the placenta or some portion of it surgically. If necessary the fetus and placenta can be examined histologically and genetically. Please try to decide beforehand whether you would like to see the fetus or not.
- If pregnancy is terminated later than 15 weeks of gestation, you will be given 1 mg of Cabergoline orally as a single dose to prevent the production of breast milk. If you are breast feeding then you can continue to do so as usual despite the termination of pregnancy.
- If you are rhesus negative you will be given a drug that will prevent Rh conflict during your next pregnancies (anti-D immunoglobulin 625 IU/ml as an intramuscular injection within 72 hours of the termination of the pregnancy).
- Following the termination of your pregnancy you will usually be able to go home on the same or following day. Bleeding may continue on average for 2 weeks, but sometimes also for up to 45 days (until your next menstruation).
- You have the right to receive a certificate for sick leave if you wish.

Feelings concerning termination of pregnancy

Terminating a pregnancy for medical reasons may cause different and sometimes conflicting emotions. Many women feel fearful (of possible pain for instance) and nervous before terminating a pregnancy. Feelings similar to mourning are also natural regardless of the reasons for terminating a pregnancy. You will be supported in all aspects by the healthcare team. Your support person can be someone close to you, who you can ask, if possible, to be at your side during the whole process. In addition you will receive advice and information on how you can seek the help of a professional counsellor (pregnancy crisis counsellor, psychologist) if you need it.

Possible complications

Very rarely (under 1%) the following complications may occur:

- Retention of the placenta (in this case it is necessary to administer drugs to empty the uterine cavity and sometimes it may be necessary to surgically remove the placenta or some portion of it;

- pelvic inflammatory disease;
- heavy bleeding;
- failure of medical abortion. In this case it may be necessary to take a new dose of the drug combination or surgically terminate the pregnancy.

When to seek emergency medical assistance

Seek emergency medical assistance if you experience any of the following: a fever (≥ 38 C) for longer than 24 hours; constant or severe lower abdominal pain that does not abate with pain killers; heavy bleeding (2 or more large pads during 2 consecutive hours); bleeding continues after the next menstruation has ended; unpleasantly smelling or dark coloured vaginal discharge, feeling faint, generally feeling unwell.

See a gynaecologist / midwife or go to the hospital's around-the-clock emergency department:

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(healthcare institution, department date of visit)

In case of problems or questions please contact us by phone on:

After the termination of pregnancy

Menstruation usually begins 4-6 weeks after the termination of pregnancy. After the termination of a pregnancy you can get pregnant again already before the beginning of your first period. You can begin planning a new pregnancy as soon as you have had your first period after an abortion.

If you do not wish to get pregnant again then you can begin using birth control pills, patches or a vaginal ring immediately after the termination of your pregnancy. A subdermal implant can be inserted or a depo injection administered in a healthcare institution before taking the medical abortion drugs, or also later. Intrauterine devices (IUDs) can be inserted during a doctor's visit once the termination of the pregnancy has been confirmed.

If you were given an appointment at a healthcare institution/ or a telephone appointment (please underline) (usually in 2-5 weeks), then it will take place

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(healthcare institution, date)

During two weeks following the abortion, it is recommended not to have sex without using a condom, not to use vaginal tampons or a menstrual cup, not to have baths (showering is permitted) and not to go swimming. It is recommended not to take a sauna when bleeding is heavy

Please terminate my pregnancy with a medical abortion. I declare that:

- 1) I have read and understood this informed consent form;
- 2) I have received counselling about the nature and method of the abortion;
- 3) I am aware that the medical method is effective but not 100%, and repeated medication administration or surgical intervention may be necessary.

Patient

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(full name, phone number, signature)

Healthcare professional

.....
(full name, code, signature)

Date