

## Post Procedure Care Instructions

**Important: Do not drive for 24 hours.**

### TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF

#### Do:

- Rest for today and take it easy for the next 24-48 hours
- Drink lots of fluids and eat well-balanced meals
- If you must travel for more than 1 hour, get up, stretch your legs and walk around for 5-10 minutes for every hour of travel

#### Avoid:

- Heavy exercise and heavy lifting for 3-4 days
- Alcohol and street drugs for 48 hours
- Smoking for 2 hours after your procedure – it may make you dizzy

Listen to your body. It will let you know when you're ready to return to your usual activities.

### WHAT TO EXPECT:

Bleeding, passing blood clots and cramping are all normal after an abortion.

#### Bleeding:

- May be light or none for the first 3 days after an abortion
- May become heavier on the 4<sup>th</sup> or 5<sup>th</sup> day with clots, dark bleeding and cramping
- Can range from none to like a heavy menstrual period
- Light bleeding or spotting may last 2-4 weeks after an abortion
- May increase with physical activity

#### Blood Clots:

- Happen because the inside of the uterus is thicker
- May be large (the size of a loonie) for the first few days

#### Cramping:

- Happens because the uterus is returning to its usual size
- Lessens if you rest and apply a hot water bottle or heating pad
- Take ibuprofen (Motrin or Advil) or acetaminophen (Tylenol) for pain
- Do not take ASA (Aspirin) for pain – it may increase bleeding

**SEE A DOCTOR:** If you:

- Have a fever: 38.0° C or 100.4° F or higher
- Have chills or shaking
- Have unusual vaginal discharge or bad odour
- Still feel pregnant 2 weeks after your procedure

**GO TO THE NEAREST HOSPITAL EMERGENCY ROOM:** If you:

- Soak 3 or more maxi pads in 3 hours
- Pass very large blood clots (the size of a lemon)

**Where to get help:**

Our staff can help you by telephone at 947-1517 during clinic hours. All other times you can:

- Call Health Links (204) 788-8200 or 1-888-315-9257
- Call or see your own health care provider or go to a walk-in clinic\*
- Go to the Emergency Department (HSC if in Winnipeg) or your nearest hospital\*

**\*IMPORTANT:** Take your discharge letter with you. It has information to help others provide the best care for you.

**AFTER YOUR PROCEDURE:** Your body will go through some normal changes.

Within 24-48 hours: Nausea, vomiting and breast tenderness lessen. Nipples may leak fluid.

Within 1-2 weeks: Pregnancy symptoms (fatigue, bloating, and mood changes) lessen.

Within 4-6 weeks: You should have a normal period.

**Prevent infection.** Finish all the antibiotics you were given, even if you feel fine.

**For the next 2 weeks:**

- Don't put anything in your vagina (no douches or vaginal sprays)
- Don't have sexual intercourse or use sex toys
- Don't use tampons - use pads until your next normal period
- No sitting in water. No tub baths, swimming or hot tubs. Showers are fine.

**A follow-up appointment is up to you.** You can come back to see us or go to your own doctor, walk-in clinic or community health clinic to ask questions about your recovery, birth control or related concerns. If you want us to insert an IUD, please let us know when you call to make your follow-up appointment.

**Consider your birth control plan.** You can get pregnant again any time after an abortion. If you are sexually active, follow the birth control plan you talked about with our staff.

If you have unprotected sex, or a condom breaks, or you miss taking your birth control pill, you can take the Emergency Contraceptive Pill (Plan B). You can get it without a prescription at community health clinics, hospital emergency departments and most pharmacies.

**Prevent sexually transmitted infections.** Always use a condom when you have sex.