

# TREATMENT of EARLY PREGNANCY LOSS (MISCARRIAGE): MEDICATION (MISOPROSTOL-ONLY)



## WHAT IS AN EARLY PREGNANCY LOSS?

Some pregnancies stop growing in the first 12 weeks. That is an early pregnancy loss.

## HOW DOES IT WORK?

A pill called misoprostol can help an early pregnancy loss to end faster.

## HOW WELL DOES THE MEDICATION WORK?

Misoprostol work 67% of the time to complete the miscarriage within two days and 84% of the time within 8 days.

## IS IT SAFE?

Yes, pills for pregnancy loss are safe. Using pills does not lower your chance of getting pregnant again.

## WHAT DO I DO?

1. You will get four tablets of 200 mcg misoprostol (800 mcg total).
2. Swallow ibuprofen one hour before you use the misoprostol. This will help with side effects.
3. Use the misoprostol at home or at another convenient place. **Choose a time when you have had a good meal and plenty of rest.**
4. There are two ways you can use the misoprostol.
  - a. **Vaginally:** Wash your hands and lie down. **Place 4 misoprostol pills in your vagina at the same time.** It doesn't matter where in the vagina you put the pills. Keep lying down for 30 minutes. After 30 minutes, you can move around as usual. If the tablets come out after 30 minutes, it is OK.
  - b. **Mouth:** Wash your hands. Put two pills inside each cheek or put four pills under your tongue. Hold them there for 30 minutes while your body absorbs the medication. Then swallow the pills with a drink.
5. Your body absorbs the medicine from the pills within 30 minutes.

If you do not start to bleed within 24 hours, you can use 4 more misoprostol pills.

## WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

- Cramps and bleeding with clots: The cramps and bleeding may be stronger than your normal period. The cramps usually start 2-4 hours after you use the misoprostol pills and may last 3-5 hours. **This heavy bleeding is not risky.** It means the pills are working. The bleeding often lasts 1-2 weeks, and may stop and start a few times.
- Nausea, diarrhea, or chills: These symptoms should get better a few hours after using the pills and should not last longer than 24 hours.

## WHAT CAN I TAKE FOR PAIN?

- **Medicine:** Take ibuprofen (Motrin or Advil), naproxen (Aleve), or acetaminophen (Tylenol) for pain according to the instructions on the package. Take this with food to avoid an upset stomach.
- **Comfort:** A hot pack may help with cramps. You can also drink some hot tea. Rest in a soothing place.

## WHAT IF IT TAKES TOO LONG OR DOESN'T WORK?

If it doesn't work or you feel it is taking too long, you can return to your clinician's office for a suction procedure or try the pills again.

## WHEN SHOULD I CALL OR RETURN TO MY CLINICIAN?

- If the bleeding becomes very heavy and soaks through more than 2 maxi pads per hour for 2 hours in a row.
- If you have severe cramps that do not get better with pain medication.
- If you feel dizzy or feel like you may "pass out."
- If you have foul-smelling discharge, chills, or a fever over 101°F (38.3°C).
- If you have overwhelming feelings of sadness or grief.

If you have any questions or concerns, call your clinician. Let your clinician know if you need help. Your clinician knows this may be a tough time for you and you have received a lot of instructions.

## HOW SOON CAN I GET PREGNANT AGAIN?

You can get pregnant soon after the pregnancy loss ends. If you want to try again, take a prenatal vitamin daily. If you are not ready to be pregnant at this time, you can talk to your clinician about birth control options.

## FEELINGS AFTER EARLY PREGNANCY LOSS

**Please understand that nothing you did caused the pregnancy loss.** 1 in 4 people experience an early pregnancy loss. We do not fully understand all of the reasons pregnancy losses occur. It is **NOT** caused by stress, sports, food, or sex.

Sometimes families and friends don't know what to say to help. If you feel very upset, you should let your clinician know and get the help you need.