

# After Care

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*What To Expect After your Abortion*



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## **Cramping**

It is normal to have cramping for a few days after an abortion. You can take medication for period cramps like Ibuprofen Advil, and Motrin. You may take 800 mg. of ibuprofen every 8 hours for cramping. For example, you would take 4 of the 200 mg. tablets of Advil to get 800 mg. of ibuprofen. If you are allergic to ibuprofen, you may take 1000 mg. of Tylenol instead. Do not take aspirin -- aspirin increases bleeding. A hot water bottle or heating pad also helps relieve cramping.

Cramping is not always a sign of a problem. Sometimes cramping can mean there are blood clots in your uterus, you have a strained muscle near your uterus, or your uterus is contracting to its normal size. Other ways to relieve cramping are:

- Massage your abdomen. Push down starting from below your belly button towards your pubic hair. You can lie down or sit on the toilet. This massage may help you to pass blood clots that might be causing your cramping.
- You can lie down on the side that hurts and pull the bottom knee up towards your chest, or put your leg on a chair and lean into the direction of the pain. If you get relief from this, the pain is most likely due to muscle strain and can be treated by resting.

## **Breast Tenderness**

Following your abortion, your breasts may remain tender for as long as two weeks. It is also possible for milk to come into your breasts. This is more likely to occur if you were more than 12 weeks in the pregnancy, measuring from your last menstrual period. If this occurs, we suggest the following:

- Place cabbage leaves on your breasts and cover with a supportive bra. Cabbage leaves should be changed every 2 hours until tenderness is relieved.
- Wear a tight fitting bra (even while you sleep).
- Do not stimulate your breasts.
- Do not squeeze or express the milky fluid.
- Tylenol or ibuprofen may be taken for discomfort.
- Ice compresses on your breasts for ten minutes every 2 hours may also provide relief.

## **Fever**

If you feel hot or have cramping, take your temperature. If your temperature is over 100.4 degrees, there is no need to panic but call us at 404-728-7900. Fever can be a sign of infection. Most infections can be treated with medication and do not require hospitalization. Early treatment is important. If Ibuprofen or Tylenol does not relieve your cramping or you have tenderness of abdomen, these can be signs of infection.

## **Bleeding**

If the amount of bleeding increases to soaking more than one maxi pad in one hour or if you begin to pass blood clots larger than a golf ball, call us at 404-728-7900.

## **Recommendations**

To make sure you recover completely:

- You may go to work or school on the day following the procedure. However, REMEMBER strenuous exercise or heavy lifting over 50 pounds should be avoided because this can cause you to bleed more.
- Be sure to take all of the medications given to you according to the directions on the label.
- We do not advise douching in general, but especially refrain from douching until after your follow-up exam.
- All of your pregnancy signs and symptoms (except breast tenderness) should decrease within 48-72 hours.
- Your next period should start four to eight weeks after your abortion. If you do not get your period after 8 weeks, call us at 404-728-7900.
- It is possible to get pregnant right after your abortion, so if pregnancy is not desired, [using a method of birth control](#) is recommended.

## **After-Care Check Up**

If you think you are having a post-abortion emergency: severe cramping not alleviated by usual methods, heavy bleeding, or fever (see explanation), you can call us at 404-728-7900 any time.

Please note that our facility is not open on a 24-hour basis. When you call after business hours, you will reach our answering service. When speaking with the service explain that you had an abortion at our clinic and that you want to speak with a nurse. They will take your information and contact us. A nurse or on-call staff member will return your call in approximately 20 minutes.

## **In-Case of an Emergency**

If you have any emergency, contact us first at 404-728-7900. Most abortion complications can be treated at our clinic, and in many cases an appointment within 24 hours is sufficient. We cannot be medically or financially responsible for any care you receive except through our office. If you do contact your private physician, and they feel treatment may be necessary, please have them call us at 404-728-7900 for your specific procedure details.