

SURGICAL ABORTION OR MEDICAL ABORTION – WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE?

	Surgical Abortion	Medical Abortion
Tests required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Blood test - before • Dating ultrasound 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Blood test – before and after • Dating ultrasound
Timing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Usually performed after 6 weeks of pregnancy • Becomes more expensive after 12 weeks of pregnancy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must be performed before 9 weeks of pregnancy • Usually performed after 6 weeks of pregnancy
Process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requires a light anaesthetic • Surgical procedure in a day surgery clinic • Procedure takes about 10 minutes • Up to 4 hours recovery time in the day surgery clinic • Sometimes light bleeding for up to 2 weeks or no bleeding • Antibiotics are given • Follow up appointment only if any complications or concerns 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Medications taken in your own home or other safe place • Cramping and heavy bleeding for the first few hours • Light bleeding usually lasts about 2 weeks but can continue for up to 6 weeks • Pain relief and anti-nausea tablets are recommended • A follow up appointment is required to make sure the abortion is complete
Supports and recovery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You will need a responsible adult to take you home from the day surgery clinic • You are not able to drive after the procedure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You will need to have a responsible adult with you for support for the first 24 hours after taking the medications
Side effects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May feel tired due to the anesthetic • May have bleeding and mild cramping – usually lasts less than 2 weeks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bleeding and cramping are expected • Fever, chills, nausea and vomiting may also occur
Complications / risks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Injury to lining of uterus or the cervix • Infection • Perforation of the uterus (a small hole) • Reaction to anaesthetic 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heavy bleeding • Infection • Incomplete abortion • Continuing pregnancy
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complications for both surgical and medical abortion are rare 	
Availability at FPNSW	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Available up to 12 weeks + 6 days of pregnancy at Chatswood • Requires 2 appointments – assessment and procedure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Available up to 9 weeks of pregnancy at all FPNSW clinics • Requires 3 appointments – assessment, prescription and follow up

For more information

Family Planning NSW Talkline –

www.fpnsw.org.au/talkline or 1300 658 886

National Relay Service (for deaf people) –

13 36 77

TIS National's interpreting service –

131 450

Visit your nearest Family Planning NSW clinic –

www.fpnsw.org.au/clinics

Family Planning NSW client factsheet –

<https://www.fpnsw.org.au/factsheets/individuals/cervical-screening/hpv-vaccination>

Family Planning NSW client resource –

<https://www.fpnsw.org.au/changes>

www.fpnsw.org.au | talkline 1300 658 886 | shop

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