

unplanned pregnancy  
advice & help



MARIE STOPES  
INTERNATIONAL

# unplanned pregnancy

Finding out you are pregnant when you do not want to be can be confusing and stressful. You do need to make decisions, but there are plenty of places you can get advice and support. This leaflet offers a brief guide.

## **I think I'm pregnant!**

Firstly, you should do a pregnancy test to make sure. It might be a false alarm. You can:

- Visit your GP, local family planning clinic or specialist young people's clinic like Brook
- Buy a home testing kit from a chemist or supermarket; some chemists also provide pregnancy testing services

## **What are my choices?**

If the test is positive and you are pregnant, you really need to think about what you want to do. Although it might be difficult, it's best if you can make a decision as soon as possible. You have three choices:

- Continue with the pregnancy and keep the baby
- Continue with the pregnancy and have the baby adopted or fostered
- End the pregnancy through abortion

## **Where can I go for help or advice?**

If you are considering abortion or are unsure what to do, you should talk to a health professional. Your doctor or family planning clinic will be able to provide confidential advice.

Alternatively, you can contact a specialist organisation like Marie Stopes International, by calling the number on this leaflet to book an appointment. There is also lots of useful information about abortion at [www.abortion-help.co.uk](http://www.abortion-help.co.uk)

### **Should I have counselling?**

If you are confused about how you feel, you may find that talking to a counsellor will help. Marie Stopes International can arrange this or your GP will be able to recommend a counsellor.

### **How can I arrange an abortion?**

Abortion is legal in Britain before 24 weeks of pregnancy with the agreement of two doctors. If you want free NHS treatment, you need to visit your GP or a family planning clinic who will arrange an appointment for you. Wait times and treatment will be different for each area. Marie Stopes International has arrangements to see women under the NHS in many areas but you would normally need a referral letter.

If you want to see us privately we can arrange an appointment straight away, without you needing to visit a doctor.

**We aim to give women the greatest possible choice about their abortion treatment**

### **How is an abortion performed?**

The most common type of abortion is a simple procedure where gentle suction is used to empty the uterus. Most abortions take place before 12 weeks of pregnancy. At this stage the procedure only takes a few minutes. In later pregnancy it is slightly more complicated.

In early pregnancy, you do not always need to be given a general anaesthetic, which can make you feel sick and dizzy. Marie Stopes International offers treatment where you can either be fully awake or drowsy during the procedure – many women choose these options because the recovery time is quicker.

### **What about the 'abortion pill'?**

Medical abortion is an alternative to surgical abortion and is available before nine weeks of pregnancy. It means taking two lots of pills over two visits which will cause you to pass the pregnancy. Many women are now choosing this method but it is not suitable for everyone. Our advisors will be able to give you further information on this treatment option.

### **Are there any risks?**

There is very little risk linked to abortion, particularly in early pregnancy. It is not true that a straightforward abortion causes problems with future pregnancies or other aspects of general health. You will be advised of the risks involved.

### **Services at Marie Stopes International**

All doctors, nurses and support teams at Marie Stopes International centres are specially trained to provide non-judgemental, confidential and professional help for women seeking help with abortion.

Visiting one of our small, friendly centres is not at all like visiting a hospital. We aim to give women the greatest possible choice about their treatment and specialise in quick modern procedures for early abortion.

- Fast, flexible appointments, including weekends
- Same day consultation and procedure available
- Choice of different treatments
- Small friendly centres
- Complete confidentiality
- Sympathetic and supportive teams
- Full aftercare service and 24 hour advice line

**For information & appointments:  
Telephone 0845 300 8090 – 24 hours  
[www.abortion-help.co.uk](http://www.abortion-help.co.uk)**

## About Marie Stopes International

Marie Stopes International is a specialist reproductive healthcare organisation and a registered charity, working in both the UK and overseas.

Our nine main UK centres help over 100,000 women and men each year with abortion, sterilisation, contraception and health screening...but the good work does not stop here.

Any financial surplus generated in the UK helps us provide reproductive healthcare services to women and their families in some of the poorest communities in the world.

The organisation campaigns for better awareness of sexual health issues and open access for everyone. Our aim is to provide high quality services, tailored to individual need. Whichever service you require, we offer convenient appointments, expert professional care and all the support you need.