

# abortion FACTS



## Fast Facts:

- "92.2% of abortions were performed at or before 13 weeks' gestation (1)."
- The abortion rate in countries where abortion is outlawed versus where it is legal is the same. You cannot lower the abortion rate by outlawing abortions (2).
- "When undertaken by a trained health-care provider in sanitary conditions, abortions are one of the safest medical procedures available, safer even than child birth (2)."
- "7 million [people] are admitted to hospitals every year in developing countries due to unsafe abortions (3)."
- 25% of uterus owners in the US will have an abortion by age 45 (4).

## It's not just about women.

Please remember that trans men and non-binary folk also need abortions.

According to the Guttmacher Institute, "We estimate that 462 to 530 TGNB [transgender, non-binary] individuals obtained abortions in 2017 and that 23% of clinics provide transgender-specific care (8)."



## Methods:

In clinic abortions work more than 99% of the time (4).

Medical abortions (medication):

- works 94-98% of the time before 8 weeks
- works 94-96% of the time between 8-9 weeks
- works 91-93% of the time between 9-10 weeks
- 99% of the time when given an extra dose of medication
- works 87% of the time between 10-11 weeks
- 98% of the time when given an extra dose of medication (4)

There are a few contraindications regarding medical abortion so consult your health care provider first. Dosages *are* effective for people of all weights (13).

## Why do people have later abortions?

In addition to the heartbreaking stories of parents who intended to have a child, but were forced to end a pregnancy due to health complications on the part of the fetus or parent, there are many reasons why someone may delay an abortion beyond 6 or 12 weeks.

**Lack of Access to Care:** In 2014, some 90% of U.S. counties lacked an abortion clinic, and five states had only one (6).

If someone has to travel for an abortion, they may need time to save money for hotel, food, and gas.

**Cost:** lack of access to abortions disproportionately affects low income and people of color.

## But doesn't it hurt the fetus??

Nope! **Not at all** in the vast majority of abortions.

According to the ACOG: "Rigorous scientific studies have found that the connections necessary to transmit signals from peripheral sensory nerves to the brain, as well as the brain structures necessary to process those signals, do not develop until at least 24 weeks of gestation. . . . "In fact, the perception of pain requires more than just the mechanical transmission and reception of signals. Pain. . . 'requires conscious recognition of a noxious stimulus.' This capacity does not develop until [28 wks] at the earliest' (7)."

## But it stops a beating heart?!

**Not really.** At the time most abortions are performed, there is no "heart," just a few functioning/beating cells that may one day become a heart. Recent research suggests that the **heart is not complete in its anatomy until the 20th week of gestation** (5). The argument that abortion "stops a beating heart" is a manipulative tactic that aims to distract you from the science.

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continued

## But can't abortion cause depression?

According to the American Psychological Association,

- "Women who are denied an abortion are more likely to initially experience higher levels of anxiety, lower life satisfaction and lower self-esteem compared with women who received an abortion. . . .
- "A woman's ability to control when and if she has a child is frequently linked to her socioeconomic standing and earning power. (11)"

Furthermore, "Abortions don't cause depression, although women who have depression and anxiety may be more likely to have abortions (12)."

"It's totally normal to have a lot of different emotions after your abortion. Everyone's experience is different, and there's no "right" or "wrong" way to feel. Most people are relieved and don't regret their decision. Others may feel sadness, guilt, or regret after an abortion. Lots of people have all these feelings at different times (4)."

## So how DO we lower the abortion rate?

Access to effective birth control and sex education. The vast majority of abortions are because of unplanned pregnancies. Preventing unplanned pregnancies in the first place, therefore, lowers abortion rates (8). The Guttmacher Institute found exactly that to be true (9). Between 17-53% of people live in contraception deserts, depending on the state with people of color and low-income folk being more likely to live in one of these areas (10).

## Bodily Autonomy

In the United States, a hospital cannot use the organs of a patient who dies or arrives dead without express consent. One person can save up to EIGHT lives through organ donation. But only if they, or their next of kin, expressly consent to an anatomical gift (organ donation). Pregnancy is a major physiological event that can lead to permanent health complications or even death. It is unethical to demand someone complete a pregnancy they do not want. **When abortions are outlawed, a corpse has more bodily autonomy than a person with a uterus.**

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