

### Comparison between early medical and surgical abortion

Early Medical Abortion	Surgical Abortion (first trimester)
Up to 9 weeks (63) days pregnancy	Up to 12 weeks 6 days
Same legal requirements	
Same pre-abortion tests: at Family Planning or primary health care provider	
Abortion takes one phone consultation, one or two visits to abortion clinic and 2 blood tests: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Stage 1 medications and blood test</li> <li>- Miscarry at home</li> <li>- May need to return for more medications 2 days later (Stage 2)</li> <li>- Stage 3 blood test</li> <li>- Follow-up within 2 weeks</li> </ul>	Abortion takes fewer visits: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Operation (in a clinic or hospital)</li> <li>- Follow-up within 2 weeks</li> </ul>
Miscarriage occurs at home	Abortion occurs in clinic or hospital
Difficult to predict how long it will take and how much pain and bleeding there will be – depends on woman and how many weeks pregnant	More predictable: most women experience similar effects in a similar timeframe
Miscarriage occurs over several hours or days	Procedure takes 3-5 minutes (total clinic time 2-3 hours)
Bleeding usually lasts longer, can be heavy with clots for 2 weeks or longer	Bleeding finishes more quickly, usually within 2 weeks, and is lighter
Cramping ranges from mild to very strong. There are usually strong cramps during the miscarriage itself	Procedure carried out with medicine to help pain. Some women don't feel anything, others find procedure causes cramps and discomfort; a few find it painful
Procedure is usually successful (90-97% depending on how many weeks pregnant). It is important to make sure there is no ectopic pregnancy (in the tube). If the procedure fails a surgical procedure may be recommended	Procedure is usually successful (99%). If it fails it needs to be repeated.
Both methods are very safe. Serious complications are very rare. It is extremely rare for future fertility to be affected	
Some women prefer this method as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- It may seem more natural, like a miscarriage</li> <li>- It can be carried out very early in pregnancy</li> <li>- No operation (unless it fails)</li> </ul>	Some women prefer this method as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- It is quick, over in a few minutes, with less time, cramping and bleeding (during and afterwards)</li> <li>- It is highly successful</li> </ul>

Some women dislike this method as:

- It takes several days and several consultations
- How long it take can't be predicted
- Cramping can be severe and last for longer
- It fails slightly more often (depending on how many weeks pregnant)

Some women dislike this method as:

- It may not be done as early in pregnancy
- There is an operation
- They have less control over the procedure

