

Day Patient Information

Please come to :

Ward 302

Level 1 Orange Zone Aberdeen Royal Infirmary, Foresterhill. AB25 2ZN
01224 553324

Day: Date: Time:

If you have any questions or if you are unable to attend please call the ACCESS nurses 01224 655679.

What to bring with you:

- Wear comfortable clothes
- Bring absorbent pads.
- You can use a mobile phone in the hospital
- Leave other valuables at home
- Smoking/vaping are not allowed on NHS premises

Eating and Drinking before your procedure :

Some people will plan a general anaesthetic (asleep), some people will plan a local anaesthetic +/- sedation (awake).

You need an empty stomach for a safe general anaesthetic.

We ask everyone to fast in case a general anaesthetic is needed.

If you are coming in at 7:00 or 8:00

Do have something to eat just before you go to bed the night before.

Do NOT eat solid food or drink pure milk, alcohol, fizzy drink or real fruit juice after 3:00 am.

Do have a drink when you wake up. You may drink as much water, diluting juice or black or white tea / coffee as you like until 7.00am.

If you are coming in at 11:30 or 12 noon

Do set your alarm and have something to eat before 7:30 am.

Do NOT eat solid food or drink pure milk, alcohol, fizzy drink or real fruit juice after 7:30am.

Do have something to drink that morning. You can drink as much water, diluting juice or black or white tea / coffee as you like until 11:30.

What happens when I come to hospital?

When you arrive the receptionist will take you to the ward.
One adult can stay with you if you like.

You will be given an antisickness tablet and some pain killers.
Then you will be given two tablets to soften the cervix and make the procedure safer.

Only take these tablets if you are sure that you want to go ahead with the abortion.

The tablets sometimes cause nausea, diarrhoea and chills.
They often cause cramps and bleeding.

If you choose to take the tablets under your tongue they need to stay there for 30 minutes and then you can swallow anything left with water.
The tablets may make your tongue feel irritated, tingly or dry.
Tablets under the tongue need at least an hour to work.

If you choose to insert the tablets vaginally stay lying down for 30 minutes.
Vaginal tablets take at least 3 hours to work. Vaginal tablets may be less likely to cause cramps and nausea than tablets under the tongue.

Let the ward team know if you need more painkillers or are having heavy bleeding.

A few people pass the pregnancy before getting to theatre. This is more likely if you are further on in pregnancy and have been given another tablet to take before you come in to hospital.

The doctor performing the operation will see you to let you know your test results from the clinic, check which type of contraception you plan to use and answer any queries.

The morning list starts at 09:00 and the last patient will have their procedure at about 11:30.

The afternoon list starts at 13:30 and the last patient will have their procedure at about 16:00.

What happens with a general (asleep) anaesthetic?

- Please remove all make up including false eyelashes and jewellery
- Remove nose, tongue or lip piercings.
- Try not to smoke or vape on the day of your operation.
- Bring contact lens cases or wear glasses.

If you are having a **general anaesthetic** the anaesthetic doctor gives the anaesthetic medicine through a cannula 'drip' in the back of your hand. You will be completely asleep for about 15 minutes.

The pregnancy is removed through the cervix using a suction technique. You will have a scan while you are still asleep to make sure that the pregnancy has been removed.

You will go to the recovery area until you are fully awake and then back to the ward.

Most people have period type cramps when they wake up.
You can eat and drink as soon as you feel like it.

You can usually go home two hours or so after you get back to the ward.

**You must arrange for someone to collect you and take you home.
It is ideal if someone can stay with you for the next 24 hours after the general anaesthetic.**

For 24 hours after a general anaesthetic you are strongly advised:

- Not to drink alcohol or take any drugs unless prescribed.
- Not to drive or cycle.
- Not to operate machinery.
- Not to sign any legal documents or make any important decisions.

What happens with a local (awake) anaesthetic?

If you are having a **local anaesthetic** there will usually be two nurses and the doctor in the operating room to support you. The procedure takes about 15 minutes.

The doctor will use a speculum (the same as used for a cervical smear or swab test) and give a local anaesthetic injection to numb 'freeze' the cervix. Some people say this stings for a minute or so, some people do not feel any discomfort.

The local anaesthetic does not make you feel sleepy and you will be able to feel and move your legs as normal. It does not affect bladder control.

When the local anaesthetic has had 2-3 minutes to get working the pregnancy is removed through the cervix using a suction technique. You will have a scan to make sure that the pregnancy has been removed.

Most people feel cramps like strong period pain/ early labour for 5 minutes or so during the procedure. This will usually settle to mild period type cramps within 15 minutes.

You will be taken back to the ward and can eat and drink as soon as you feel like it.

You can usually go home after about an hour.

It is best if you have someone to collect you but you can go home alone.

There are no restrictions on driving or other activities if you feel well.

What Happens With Local (awake) Anaesthetic + Pentrox ?

The procedure is the same as for local anaesthetic but you would have Pentrox as an additional strong painkiller.

Pentrox is not the same as 'gas and air'.

You breathe it in and out through a plastic 'whistle'. It has a strong smell and might make you cough at first.

Some people feel sleepy and some people feel drunk or 'high'.

Some people can feel dizzy or nauseous.

Any effects stop very soon after you stop breathing it in.

We will give you more information about how to use it when you come in to hospital.

You can usually go home after about an hour.

It is best if you have someone to collect you but you can go home alone.

We advise you **NOT TO DRIVE HOME** as Pentrox might affect your ability to drive or operate machinery.

Contraception

We advise you wait until the bleeding has settled before having sex to reduce the risk of infection but you could become pregnant again as soon as 5 days after the abortion.

You can have an implant or an IUD (coil) fitted while you are in theatre.

You could have the first dose of the progestogen contraceptive injection before you leave the ward.

We can supply contraceptive pills or a prescription for the patch or ring.

What about my clinic test results?

One of the clinic blood tests is to check your blood group. If you are 12 weeks or over and have a Rhesus negative blood group we will advise that you have an injection while you are in hospital. This injection is called Anti-D and prevents serious problems that could affect a baby in a future pregnancy. We will offer you more information about this if you are Rhesus negative.

Everyone having a surgical abortion is advised to take one dose of antibiotic before leaving hospital to reduce the chance of infection.

If your tests showed any infection we will arrange treatment. We can advise about tests and treatment for your partner if necessary.

Sometimes not all the infection test results are back until after you have been in for the procedure. We will contact you if any action is needed. This will be a phone call or text from a withheld number.

Please pick up the call / call back as soon as possible.

You may need antibiotic treatment.

Untreated infection may lead to pelvic inflammatory disease which may cause long term pain and fertility problems.

What should I expect afterwards?

Most people recover quickly after the procedure. Some people want to get back to work as soon as possible; others prefer to have a few days off.

You need the next day off work/ help with childcare after a general anaesthetic.

You may feel able to go to work the next day if you had a local anaesthetic or local anaesthetic + Pentrox.

Many people have period type cramps for a few days after the procedure. You may want to use a heat pad or take painkillers such as paracetamol or ibuprofen.

You will probably have bleeding like a heavy period for a week and lighter bleeding for another one to two weeks. The first period after the operation may be heavier than usual.

We advise you to use pads not tampons until the bleeding settles to cut the risk of infection.

Pregnancy symptoms such as nausea and breast tenderness usually improve within a few days.

When Should I Get Medical Advice?

There is a small chance of heavy bleeding or infection after an abortion. Less than 3 in every 100 people need further treatment because not all the pregnancy tissue has come away.

Around 1 in every 1000 people having an abortion need a blood transfusion. Less than 1 in 10 have an infection needing antibiotic.

Get medical advice as soon as possible if you have:

- Heavy bleeding -for example soaking 2 pads an hour for 2 hours
- a high fever or chills
- pelvic pain that gets worse after the abortion day
- bad smelling discharge

This may be the ACCESS nurse, the gynaecology ward, NHS 24 or even a 999 emergency ambulance depending on the time of day and what is happening.

If you are under 7 weeks pregnant when you have the abortion we will give you a special low sensitivity pregnancy test to do at home 14-16 days later. This is to make sure that the pregnancy has ended. If the test is positive or you still feel pregnant please get in touch with the ACCESS nurses who will arrange an ultrasound scan.

Other support available

It may take time to come to terms with your feelings. A lot will depend on your reasons for having the termination. Some people feel sad, some feel relieved. Many will feel a mixture of both.

Talking to friends and family may help but sometimes they may seem too close.

Please phone the ACCESS nurses if you or your partner would like to talk things over.

You can also contact Abortion Talk www.abortiontalk.com

 03330 909 266 7-10pm Mon, Tue, Wed, Thur

Useful telephone numbers

Short stay ward 302 Aberdeen Royal Infirmary

☎ 01224 553324

Mon 08:30- Saturday 10:00

ACCESS nurses - Aberdeen Community Health & Care Village

☎ 01224 655679

Mon-Thurs 0830-16:30 Fri 0830-16:00

Call here first The nurse may not be able to answer immediately if they are with another patient but leave a message and they will call you back as soon as possible.

Gynaecology Ward - Aberdeen Royal Infirmary – if you live in Aberdeen City or Shire

☎ 01224 550542

24 hours, 7 days a week- **call evenings or weekends** when the ACCESS service is closed

Ward 3 Dr Grays Hospital – if you live in Moray

☎ 01343 567220

24 hours, 7 days a week- **call evenings or weekends** when the ACCESS service is closed

ACCESS clinic coordinator

☎ 01224 655535

Monday to Friday, 9am to 2pm.

NHS 24 - **☎ 111**

Data protection and Privacy Assurance

Information about your clinic visit and clinic/hospital treatment is recorded on the secure NHS Grampian Clinical system (Trakcare) and the Scottish Sexual Health system (NASH). It is recorded in your hospital paper records if you attend hospital.

We ask if we can also contact your GP directly about the abortion.

Some information about abortion procedures must be recorded to meet the requirements of the Abortion Act 1967 and the Abortion (Scotland) Regulations 1991. This is sent in confidence to the Information Services Division of NHS National Services Scotland (ISD). The data is sent securely via the Chief Medical Officer's Department. This is used to monitor and plan service delivery.

The NHS Grampian abortion database collects information for research and to plan and monitor service development.

All personal data is processed and stored securely in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) 2018