

Medication Management of Abortion or Early Pregnancy Loss

How to use misoprostol tablets

This handout explains how to use misoprostol, including what to do before and after placing the tablets. In the clinic, you may have also received mifepristone. Sometimes mifepristone causes uterine cramping, vaginal bleeding, nausea, and vomiting.

Using Your Misoprostol Tablets

You will go home with 4 to 8 misoprostol (Cytotec) tablets. The number of tablets will depend on how many weeks you have been pregnant. If you are more than 9 weeks pregnant, you will receive 8 tablets. Misoprostol will contract and empty your uterus.

You may use misoprostol either by placing it in your vagina (*vaginal method*) **or** between your cheek and gum (*buccal method*). You may choose either method, depending on what you prefer.

Before using either method below, take ibuprofen (Advil, Motrin) or naproxen (Aleve) as directed by your doctor at least 30 minutes **before** placing the misoprostol tablets.

Vaginal Method

1. In 24 to 72 hours, place 4 misoprostol tablets in your vagina as far as you can reach, similar to placing a tampon.
2. If you received 8 tablets, wait 4 hours and then take the additional 4 tablets using the buccal method (see below).

Buccal Method (between your cheek and gum)

1. In 24 to 72 hours, place 4 misoprostol tablets between your cheek and gum (*buccally*) and allow them to dissolve (2 on each side).
2. If they are not fully dissolved in 30 minutes, you may swallow the remainder with water.
3. If you received 8 tablets, wait 4 hours and then take the additional 4 tablets using this same method.

After the Procedure

You may continue to have some vaginal bleeding for 2 to 8 weeks.

- Return to the clinic in 1 or 2 weeks to make sure the pregnancy has passed **or** take a home pregnancy test in 4 weeks and call the clinic if it is positive.
- You may resume sexual activity when you feel ready.
- If you want to prevent pregnancy, start birth control before you have sex. You can get pregnant even before you have a period if you are not using birth control.
- Expect your next period to start in 4 to 8 weeks. This may vary depending on your birth control.
- You may resume normal activities the day after the pregnancy has passed, if you feel ready. If an activity makes your cramping or bleeding worse, do not do that activity for a few days.
- Take good care of yourself. Rest when you are tired, eat healthy foods, and drink plenty of fluids.

Questions?

Your questions are important. Call your doctor or healthcare provider if you have questions or concerns.

- UWMC Maternal and Infant Care Clinic:** 206.598.4070
1959 N.E. Pacific St.
Seattle, WA 98195
- UWMC Women’s Health Care Center:** 206.598.5500
4245 Roosevelt Way N.E.
Seattle, WA 98195
- UWPC Northgate Family Medicine:** 206.528.8000
314 NE Thornton Pl
Seattle, WA 98125
- Harborview Family Medicine Clinic at the Pat Steele Building:**
206.744.8274, option 2
401 Broadway, Suite 2018
Seattle, WA 98104
- Women’s Clinic at Harborview:** 206.744.3367
325 Ninth Ave.,
Ground Floor, West Clinic
Seattle, WA 98104

When to Call the Clinic

Call the clinic if you:

- Do not have bleeding and cramping within 72 hours of placing the misoprostol.
- Have heavy vaginal bleeding that is soaking through more than 2 maxi-pads an hour for 2 or more hours in a row.
- Have a fever higher than 100.4°F (38°C) for more than 8 hours.
- Are vomiting for more than 4 hours.
- Have a lot of pain despite taking pain medicine.