

Pregnancy Advisory Service

Many women are faced with an unplanned pregnancy and find it hard to make a decision about what to do. At the Pregnancy Advisory Clinic we are here to help and support you in making this decision together. It is not our intention to encourage you into making a particular decision but to help you gain the support, advice and information to make the right decision for you at this particular time.

If you suspect you are pregnant, you need to confirm this with a pregnancy test. You can buy a home test from a pharmacy or you can obtain a test from your GP, Health Centre, Contraception/Sexual Health Clinic.

If you are pregnant then you have three choices:

- Continue the pregnancy and keep the baby.
- Continue the pregnancy and place the baby for adoption.
- End the pregnancy by having an abortion.

It is quite normal to have mixed feelings about being pregnant and about each of the options available; making a decision can be difficult and frightening. In making the decision it is helpful to be clear about your feelings by listing and exploring them.

You may find it useful to discuss the options and obtain more information regarding health issues and social support. A referral to the Pregnancy Advisory Service can be arranged for a consultation with the Pregnancy Advisory Nurse Specialist. She will be able to provide you with support and where necessary arrange referral to other professionals, such as the Teenage Pregnancy Midwife, Drug Misuse Midwife or Social Worker.

If you go ahead with an abortion this is free but you need to be referred to the service.

This can be via:

- A GP (if you think your own GP may not be sympathetic or does not make referrals for religious grounds you can go to another doctor).
- Contraception/Sexual Health Clinics.
- Or you can refer yourself on 01792 200303. (Monday – Thursday 8.00 – 3.00 and Friday 8.00 – 12.00 noon).

A referral will be sent to the hospital and you will need to telephone 01792 200303 after 24 hours to arrange a convenient appointment for yourself. Please phone Monday to Thursday between 8.00am and 3.00pm or Friday between 8.00am and 12.00 noon. Please ring this number if you no longer require a referral.

If you change your mind before your appointment, please telephone to let us know. We can then give the appointment to someone else.

What will happen at the specialist appointment?

The health professional will ask you questions. Bloods will be taken and tests for sexually-transmitted infections offered. An ultrasound scan will be done to determine how advanced your pregnancy is, please ensure you have a full bladder for this procedure (you do not have to watch the screen).

The health professional will then discuss the options available to you and will advise you on the method of termination which will best suit you and explain the procedure. The health professional will answer any questions you may have. If you are going ahead with the termination, you may be able to start the treatment that day or you will be given another appointment to return to the hospital to have it performed. This is usually within the next couple of days.

Can I change my mind?

Seeing the health professional does not mean you have to proceed with a termination. You can change your mind any time up until the procedure is commenced. If you feel under pressure, if you feel upset or unsure about what to do or if you simply need time away from everything to think through your decision, please ask for a further appointment.

We can provide you with support and help with making the decision. We can advise you about alternatives to a termination such as adoption or organisations that can support you if you decide to go ahead with the pregnancy. We may also suggest you see a counsellor if you feel this would be beneficial.

How is the termination performed?

There are different methods of terminations depending on the number of weeks you are pregnant, your medical history and your preference of procedure. This will also determine in which hospital the procedure is carried out – Neath Port Talbot or Singleton Hospital

Medical termination of pregnancy (MTOP)

This is like a miscarriage. You take medication to cause a miscarriage. It can be carried out between 5 and 18 weeks pregnant and is performed in Singleton Hospital.

The first stage involves taking a tablet Mifepristone 200mgs which is taken orally (by mouth). This blocks the hormone that makes the lining of the uterus hold onto the pregnancy. Depending on the method of termination you may have the opportunity to start your treatment at the first appointment. It is important you have considered all your options and are certain you want a termination before taking this tablet. If you have any doubts it is important that you delay starting your treatment and consider your options further. After this tablet alone you could go on to miscarry.

Treatment for the second stage can be one to two days later. During the time between the first and second stage you can behave entirely normally and go to work as usual. You may have some slight bleeding. A few people may experience heavy bleeding and clots, with 5% of women having a complete abortion. If you are concerned you should contact the hospital.

Under 9 weeks MTOP

Early Medical Abortion

Following this first tablet, you will commence the second stage 24 – 48 hours later. You will be given Misoprostol 800 microgramms. This will cause the lining to break down and uterine contractions that cause the foetus and placental tissue to be expelled.

Remain in hospital

You can remain in hospital for approximately six hours after receiving the Misoprostol medication. The nurses will be able to provide support, painkillers and deal with any products passed. The majority of patients will abort during this time. You will be offered the next available appointment for your treatment.

Early Medical Abortion at home

This procedure can commence at your PAS consultation if you choose to do so. You will be given the first tablet Mifepristone 200 milligrams which you will take at the clinic. You will then be given the second stage to take home to do yourself, 24 – 48 hours later. This means you will miscarry in the privacy of your own home. You need to meet certain criteria for this procedure and this will be assessed in the clinic. Should you decide to have this procedure you will be provided with full instructions.

Over 10 weeks MTOP

You will need to stay in hospital for treatment and until you miscarry. Misoprostol 800 micrograms will be given on admission and repeated 3-hourly if needed to a

maximum of five doses. This will cause the lining to break down and uterine contractions that cause the foetus and placental tissue to be expelled. This often occurs after the second or third dose of tablets but you sometimes need the full five doses. Occasionally this fails and you will need to stay in hospital overnight for treatment to be repeated the following day.

Surgical methods

Manual Vacuum Aspiration (MVA)

MVA is performed with the use of a hand-held syringe as a source of suction for removing pregnancy tissue from inside the womb, with painkillers and local anaesthetic. It is very effective and has few complications. It is performed between 5 and 10 weeks. It will be performed in Singleton Hospital and will take less than twenty minutes but you will be in hospital 3 – 4 hours.

Surgical termination of pregnancy under general anaesthetic

This is performed at Neath Port Talbot Hospital between 7 and 12 weeks. This procedure is done under general anaesthetic, where you are put to sleep. You will be given two tablets before the operation to help soften the cervix (neck of womb).

The operation takes about five minutes while you are asleep. The cervix is stretched open, a thin plastic tube is inserted into the uterus (womb) and the pregnancy is carefully removed. After you wake up from the anaesthetic you may feel a little tearful but this and any period-like discomfort you have will soon pass and you will be allowed home later the same day.

Surgical termination is a safe procedure but all operations carry a small risk, these will be discussed in clinic.

After the termination

Whichever method is used you may bleed for up to two weeks, although this will not normally be heavy. If you experience any problems please contact the Gynaecology Ward direct (telephone number– ☎01792 285206).

How will I feel?

For many women there is no easy decision about having a termination of pregnancy. If it seems clear to you that you ought to go ahead, it is very likely that you will also feel some regret and upset as well.

So although you may experience relief when the procedure is over, you may find yourself feeling quite low and tearful for a while afterwards. This reaction is quite

common and will normally pass given time. If it does not, it may be because you find it difficult to discuss your feelings with anyone, or it may be that there is no one around to give you support at home.


If this is the case please do not hesitate to telephone **01792 285005 / 285017** to make an appointment.

What about future contraception?

This will be discussed with you at the clinic.

Telephone Contact Details

To make, cancel or change an appointment

 01792 200303

8.00am – 3.00pm Monday to Thursday
8.00am – 12.00 noon Friday

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