

FACT SHEET: LATE-TERM (MID-TRIMESTER) ABORTION

Many women find themselves having to make the often-difficult decision to end a pregnancy when their pregnancy has progressed beyond 14 weeks gestation. This information may help guide you if you find yourself or a loved one in that situation.

What is a late-term abortion?

There is no clear definition of what is a late-term abortion, but this advice will refer to surgical terminations of pregnancy that happen from 14 weeks to 22 weeks gestation. This range of gestations falls within the middle three months of a full-term pregnancy.

Is it legal to have an abortion when the pregnancy is further along?

In the state of NSW, women can safely and legally access a termination of pregnancy up to 22 weeks gestation. Termination of a pregnancy after 22 weeks gestation is possible, but special restrictions apply, and this cannot be done at Clinic 66.

What happens during the abortion procedure?

Depending on how far along the pregnancy is and some other factors, a mid-trimester termination of pregnancy procedure may be completed over one day or two days. All abortion procedures are done under sedation anaesthesia. After the anaesthetic has been given, the neck of the womb (cervix) is gently pushed open to allow the removal of the pregnancy tissue. Women are then monitored in the recovery area to make sure that they are comfortable and have a normal amount of bleeding.

Can I have contraception on the same day?

For various reasons, some contraceptive options may not be suitable for use at the time of a mid-trimester abortion. However, future contraception is always reviewed in detail, and a plan for accessing or starting contraception is discussed when you are in the clinic.



Is a late term abortion safe?

The preparation and surgical techniques used for the abortion process are designed to safely empty the womb without damaging it. All abortion procedures are done to the highest standard of medical care by very experienced practitioners, and women should expect to make a prompt and full recovery.

How should I prepare for a procedure?

It is important to have a recent ultrasound examination report available as this will help the clinic team to advise you about your options. You should plan to stay in the Sydney metropolitan area overnight if you are having a procedure completed over two days. After you have had a procedure with anaesthetic, you will need to organise for an adult person to escort you home.