



Termination of Pregnancy

...

It's your choice

Ukukhupha Isisu

...

**Ukuzikhethela okunokwenziwa
nguwe wedwa**

Termination of Pregnancy ... A choice only you can make

An unwanted pregnancy can have an enormous effect on a woman's life. An unwanted pregnancy can be as a result of failed contraception, rape, incest or simply forgetting to take a contraceptive on time. **Whatever the reason** may be, it is ultimately the woman's choice whether or not she chooses to terminate the pregnancy.

It is often not an easy decision for a woman to terminate a pregnancy and nobody should be judged for the decisions that they make. Every woman's circumstances are different and therefore it is important that they understand their right, under South African law, to make their own decisions.

Before making an informed decision it is important that women understand the options that are open to them in the event that they fall pregnant.



If you fall pregnant you have 3 options:

1. Go through with the pregnancy if you think you have the support to do so and you want to raise the child.
2. Go through with the pregnancy and give the baby up for adoption.
3. Terminate the pregnancy.

Each of these options requires careful consideration and ultimately depends on the individual woman's circumstances at the time of the pregnancy. If you choose to terminate a pregnancy there are some important things that you should know.

This booklet is designed to help you make the choice that is right for you.

*contraceptives
(izicwangcisi)*

*Emergency
contraception
(ukuthintela
ukukhulelwa
ngongxamiseko)*

*contraceptive pills
(izicwangcisi
ntsapho)*

*clinic provider (iziko
lakho lezempilo)*

*Inter Uterine Device
(Iloop)*

*sexually transmitted
infections (izifo
ezosulela ngolalano)*

*gonorrhea,
Chlamydia,
Trichomonas,
syphilis) (imizekelo
yezifo ezosulela
ngolalano ezifana
negcushuwa)*

When can pregnancy happen?

A woman is likely to get pregnant if she or her partner do not use **contraceptives**. Pregnancy can happen at any time between periods.

A girl or woman can get pregnant:

- Even if she is having sex for the first time.
- Even if she has sex standing up.
- Even if the man comes (ejaculates) outside her vagina (if it is close enough to enter the vagina).
- Even if she washes immediately after sex.
- Even if she is breastfeeding.



How can I prevent pregnancy?

There are many different ways to prevent pregnancy. These include using condoms, contraceptive pills, contraceptive injections, and emergency contraception.

Emergency contraception is usually special pills or using oral contraceptive pills in a different way. Your **clinic provider** can give them to you and explain how to use them. An IUD (**Inter Uterine Device**) can also be used for emergency contraception. Both of these can be used up to five days after unprotected sex, but the earlier they are used, the more effective they are in preventing pregnancy.

Condoms are the only contraceptive method that also prevent the transmission of HIV and other **sexually transmitted infections**. If you are infected with a sexual transmitted infection (STI), like **Gonorrhea, Chlamydia, Trichomonas, Syphilis**, your health worker will give you medication to treat the infection, or refer you to a special clinic and suggest that you test for HIV. The reason for this is because clients are at a higher risk of contracting HIV if they are already infected with another STI.

TERMINATION OF PREGNANCY

A **termination of pregnancy** is when a woman decides to end her pregnancy before its full term, by a medical or surgical means. Another term for termination of pregnancy is '**abortion**'.

It is important that you fully consider all of your options when making this decision. Depending on how far along your pregnancy is, you may have different **abortion methods** available to you.

What Does Having TOP Involve?

You will need to make an appointment with a **provider**. Although each woman's TOP options depend on her **unique situation** and desires, the general information that follows should help you in

Can anyone have a TOP?

TOP is a special procedure that can only be carried out by a trained health worker in a government approved clinic or hospital.

By South African law, any girl or woman can ask for a TOP in the first three months (12 weeks) of pregnancy. It is important to act quickly if you think you are pregnant and don't want to go through with the pregnancy because the earlier you act, the safer it is.

A girl over the age of 14 does not require **parental consent** to have a pregnancy terminated. Neither does a woman require the **consent of her partner**.

If a woman is three to five months pregnant the TOP is much **more complicated**. In such cases the doctor will only carry out the TOP under the following conditions:

- If there is a risk to the physical or mental health of the woman or fetus;
- If having the baby will cause major social or economic problems for the mother;
- If the woman is pregnant from **rape** or **incest**.



termination of pregnancy
(ukukhupha isisu)

abortion
(ukukhupha isisu)

abortion methods
(indlela zokukhupha isisu)

provider (iziko loncedo)

unique situation
(imeko eyahlukileyo)

parental consent
(imvume yabazali)

consent of her partner
(imvume yeqabane)

complicated
(inzima)

rape (udlwengulo)

incest (ukulalana nesizalwane)

What does the South African law say about Termination of Pregnancy?



On December 11, 1996, South Africa enacted the Choice on Termination of Pregnancy Act (CTOP).

The CTOP Act protects the right of any girl or woman to have an abortion during the first 12 weeks of pregnancy.

The CTOP Act provides that a pregnancy may be terminated upon:

- Request of a woman during the first 12 weeks of gestation (pregnancy).
- Only the consent of the woman is required for termination.
- This means that the consent of her husband/partner is NOT required.
- Permission from a doctor is NOT required.
- In the case of a minor consent of a parent is NOT required.
- Women have a right to information concerning the right to TOP.

What Happens After Thirteen Weeks?

A woman has to consult a medical practitioner who may advise a TOP if:

- The continued pregnancy will pose a risk of injury to the woman's physical or mental health.
- There is a substantial risk that the fetus suffers from severe physical or mental abnormality.
- The pregnancy resulted from rape or incest.
- The continued pregnancy would significantly affect the social or economic circumstances of the woman.

What Happens after Twenty Weeks?

After 20 weeks a TOP is available only under certain conditions. A medical practitioner with a second opinion from a colleague or registered midwife must agree that the continued pregnancy:

- Would endanger the woman's life.
- Would result in severe malformation of the fetus.
- Would pose a risk of injury to the fetus.

Therefore:

- After 13 weeks of pregnancy onwards the decision have a TOP can no longer be decided by a woman on her own.
- After 20 weeks the availability of an abortion is significantly limited. This is an attempt to balance the ethical issues relating to the fetus as it develops and is able to survive outside of the uterus.



Pathfinder International South Africa, with funding from the Safe Abortion Action Fund, works in conjunction with the Western Cape Provincial Department and the City of Cape Town to improve access and quality of TOP services for women in Khayelitsha.

The aim of the partnership is to ensure comprehensive TOP and reproductive health services. The emphasis is on the prevention of future unwanted pregnancies.

The services are accompanied by extensive community mobilization that sensitizes communities about the need for the service and also educates women about reproductive health care.

For more information on the partnership or Pathfinder International, please visit www.pathfind.org or call 011-884-1011.