

ABORTION CLINICS

CARE, BC Women's Hospital and Health Centre

4500 Oak Street

Vancouver V6H 3N1

604-875-2022

Surgical abortions from the 7th to 16th week of pregnancy. Decision-making counselling, pre- and post-abortion counselling, health screening. Self-referral.

Elizabeth Bagshaw Women's Clinic

200-1177 West Broadway

Vancouver V3L 3X1

604-736-7878

Surgical abortions up to the 14th week of pregnancy. Decision-making counselling and pre- and post-abortion counselling.

Everywoman's Health Centre

210-2525 Commercial Drive

Vancouver V5N 4C1

604-322-6692

Surgical abortions from the 6th to 13th week of pregnancy, full medical examinations, decision-making counselling, pre- and post-abortion counselling.

Women's Services Clinic, Kelowna General Hospital

2268 Pandosy Street

Kelowna V1T 1T2

250-979-0251

Surgical abortions.

Wiebe Medical Abortion Clinic

1013-750 West Broadway

Vancouver V5Z 1H9

604-874-9897

Medical (non-surgical) abortions up to the 7th week of pregnancy.

ABORTION SUPPORT SERVICES

CARE, *BC Women's Hospital and Health Centre*

4500 Oak Street

Vancouver V6H 3N1

604-875-2022

Decision-making counselling and pre- and post-abortion counselling. Self-referral.

Elizabeth Bagshaw Women's Clinic

200-1177 West Broadway

Vancouver V3L 3X1

604-736-7878

Decision-making counselling and pre- and post-abortion counselling.

Everywoman's Health Centre

210-2525 Commercial Drive

Vancouver V5N 4C1

604-322-6692

Decision-making counselling and pre- and post-abortion counselling.

Planned Parenthood

201-1001 West Broadway

Vancouver V6H 4B1

604-731-4252

Medical, scientific, and other information on all aspects of sexual and reproductive health. Their **Facts of Life Line (731-7803)** provides information and referral on reproductive health and/or sexuality concerns.

Post Abortion Community Services

7416 Edmonds Street

Burnaby V3N 1A8

604-525-0999

Support groups and free individual counselling to those grieving from a past abortion.

Pregnancy Options Service, *BC Women's Hospital and Health Centre*

4500 Oak Street

Vancouver V6H 3N1

604-875-3163 or 1-888-875-3163

Free, confidential telephone counselling for women with unintended pregnancies. Information and referral on province-wide abortion services.

GETTING AN ABORTION IN BC

HOW?

You can get an abortion by making an appointment with one of the five abortion clinics in the province. Or, you can get a referral from a doctor and have the abortion performed by a specialist in a hospital. If you can't get a doctor's referral call **Pregnancy Options (604-875-3163 or 1-888-875-3163)** for a referral. Your abortion records are kept confidential by law. You don't need parent consent to get an abortion if you are a teenager.

WHAT'S THE COST?

If you're covered by MSP there is no cost for a surgical abortion. If you're not covered and have lived in BC for the last three months, you should apply to MSP as soon as possible, because it's much cheaper than paying for an abortion. If you're covered under someone else's plan and are worried that they'll find out, rest assured that they won't: abortions have to be kept confidential by all service providers. If you can't get coverage (i.e. you haven't lived in BC for more than three months), the cost of a surgical abortion is about \$400 to \$450. Some of that may be reimbursed once you get your coverage. If you can't afford an abortion and aren't eligible for coverage, talk to one of the abortion clinics and they may be able to work out a payment plan or a cheaper rate for you. For a medical abortion, the cost is about \$50 with coverage and about \$275 without.

HOSPITAL VS CLINIC ABORTIONS

There are important differences between having an abortion in a clinic versus having one in a hospital. The first, as already mentioned, is that you don't need a doctor's referral to use the services of a clinic. The second is that in a clinic you are awake during the procedure, while in a hospital you're given a general anaesthetic to make you unconscious. This is not necessarily an advantage since surgical abortions last only about 10 minutes and they don't hurt (although in both cases you may experience cramping afterwards). Clinics also offer pre- and post- abortion counselling; hospitals do not. Aside from these obvious differences there are intangible differences: hospital environments tend to be cold and sterile, while clinics make more of an effort to create a comfortable, relaxing, non-judgmental environment.

SURGICAL VS MEDICAL ABORTIONS

Surgical abortions are simple procedures. A local anaesthetic is applied to the uterus to numb it, then a small tube is inserted into the cervix. This tube is attached to a machine that suctions the inside of the uterus. Surgical abortions are safe to be performed anywhere between the 9th to 16th weeks of pregnancy. Some places in the United States perform surgical abortions up to the 24th week of pregnancy. In a medical abortion two drugs, methotrexate and misoprostol, are used to induce miscarriage. There may be side effects such as nausea, dizziness and fatigue, but some women prefer this method because it's non-invasive and happens in the privacy of their own home. Medical abortions only work in the early stages of pregnancy, up to the 7th week.

Sources: www.prochoiceactionnetwork-canada.org/abortioninfo.html

“Medical Abortions: A Non-Surgical Alternative Available in BC” by Krisztina Kun.
Action, Spring 2002.

THE EMERGENCY CONTRACEPTIVE PILL

WHAT IS IT?

The Emergency Contraceptive Pill (or morning after pill) contains hormones that prevent ovulation or implantation of a fertilized egg in the wall of the uterus. It is effective only up to 72 hours (3 days) after having unprotected sex. You will be given 2 pills to be taken 12 hours apart, and depending on where you go, you may also be given gravol pills for anti-nausea – many women experience nausea and vomiting as side effects.

WHERE IS IT AVAILABLE?

You can get the ECP at **free medical or youth clinics** at no cost and usually without an appointment. A nurse dispenses the pill and will explain to you what it is, how it works, and how it may affect you.

Planned Parenthood clinics dispense the ECP for only \$3. There is a Planned Parenthood clinic in the following areas: Vancouver, North Vancouver, Burnaby, Surrey, White Rock, Port Coquitlam, New Westminster, Abbotsford, Maple Ridge, and Whistler. The Vancouver clinic is located in the Vancouver General Hospital Women's Clinic at **805 West 12th Avenue, 604-731-4252**. Call for an appointment or to find out the exact locations of other clinics.

You can make an appointment with your **family doctor** who will charge you anywhere between \$5 to \$30 for the ECP.

In BC women can now get the ECP without a prescription, in other words, **over the counter at pharmacies**. Although it may be faster and more convenient, be aware that it will also be very expensive. There is a mandatory 15 to 20 minute consultation (even if you've used it before) for which you'll be charged a fee of \$20 to \$25. The pills themselves will cost about \$30, so altogether you'll pay at least \$50. If you decide you'd also like to take an anti-nauseant, you'll have to buy that separately – it costs \$3 or \$4 for a packet of 25. Only pharmacists who have been specially trained are legally able to dispense the ECP, so whatever pharmacy you visit, it's best to call ahead and make sure that there is a 'qualified pharmacist' working at the time you make your visit. All **London Drugs** and **Shoppers Drug Mart** pharmacies dispense the ECP.

A last-ditch place to get the ECP is at any **Hospital Emergency**. Even though it's free the wait will be 4 to 5 hours since they're always so busy. You can call ahead to get an estimate of how long it will take.