

What should
I know about
abortion?



ABORTION IS ONE OF THE MOST COMMON MEDICAL PROCEDURES IN THE WORLD BUT WE DON'T ALWAYS HAVE THE FACTS WE NEED ABOUT IT.



WHAT IS ABORTION?

Abortion, sometimes called 'termination of pregnancy' is when someone chooses to end a pregnancy. A woman can decide to have an abortion for a number of reasons. This might be because:

- They are young and want to continue school and aren't ready to have a baby.
- They already have children and can't imagine another.
- They don't want children at all.
- Now isn't the right time to start a family.
- There is a health issue.
- They have been raped and don't want to continue the pregnancy.
- They can't afford to have another baby.

This leaflet gives you the basics and links you to further sources of information so that you can educate yourself and others around you!

WHAT IS SAFE ABORTION?

Safe abortion refers to abortion that is done with a method recommended by World Health Organization (WHO) (i.e. medical abortion, vacuum aspiration, or dilatation and evacuation), is appropriate to the pregnancy duration, and is provided by a trained health-care provider.

WHOSE DECISION IS IT?

The Constitution of Nepal 2009 recognizes sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) as a fundamental human right of every citizen. It is a woman who becomes pregnant and abortion is a matter of her rights and autonomy. The decisions concerning when, how many and why to or not have any children is the right of the woman.

SAFE ABORTION IN THE CONTEXT OF NEPAL

Nepal conditionally legalized abortion on 2059 B.S. There have been certain changes in the legal conditions for provision of safe abortion as per the newly formulated and implemented *"The Right to Safe Motherhood and Reproductive Health Act, 2075 B.S."*

According to this recent act, a pregnant woman shall have the right to access safe abortion in a certified health facility with a certified health service provider under the following circumstances:

- a. With the consent of pregnant woman, up to 12 weeks of pregnancy.
- b. If the pregnancy results from rape or incest, up to 28 weeks of pregnancy, with the pregnant woman's consent.
- c. Up to 28 weeks of pregnancy, if the pregnancy poses danger to the life or physical or mental health of the pregnant woman or the chance of a birth of a severely physically deformed child as per the suggestion from certified health service provider, with the consent of the woman.
- d. Up to 28 weeks of pregnancy if the pregnant woman suffers from HIV or any such other incurable diseases, with her consent.
- e. Up to 28 weeks of pregnancy if the fetus is suffering from a severely debilitating or fatal deformity, as certified by an expert physician.

CONDITIONS UNDER WHICH SAFE ABORTION CANNOT BE PERFORMED:

1. *Abortion without the consent of pregnant woman*

- a. Except in the circumstances as mentioned per the law, no one should conduct or get abortion conducted with an intention to get the abortion conducted upon knowledge or with reason to believe that abortion can occur.
- b. No abortion should be conducted by coercing a pregnant woman, threatening, enticing or tempting her.

2. *Sex selective abortions*

- a. No one should commit or cause to commit an act to identify the sex of the fetus in the womb.
- b. A pregnant woman should not be pressurized or compelled or intimidated or coerced or enticed or entrapped in undue influence to identify the sex of the fetus.

Provisions related to Consent

- The pregnant woman who wants to obtain safe abortion service shall have to give consent in the prescribed format to the licensed health institution or to the licensed health worker.
- In case the pregnant woman cannot give her consent on the very moment, is mentally incompetent or hasn't completed 18 years of age; her guardian can give their consent.

WHO HAS ABORTIONS?

One in every four pregnancies around the world ends in abortion. This means it is likely that we all know people who have had at least one abortion. These may be our friends, grandmas, cousins and aunties. However, we might not know that someone has had an abortion as it's not always discussed openly. There is not one 'type' of person who has an abortion- it can be someone of any fertile age (from around 12 to 50 years old) and from any type of background.

WHERE CAN I GET MORE INFORMATION?

The World Health Organization is a good source of factual information about abortion (and other health issues):

www.who.int

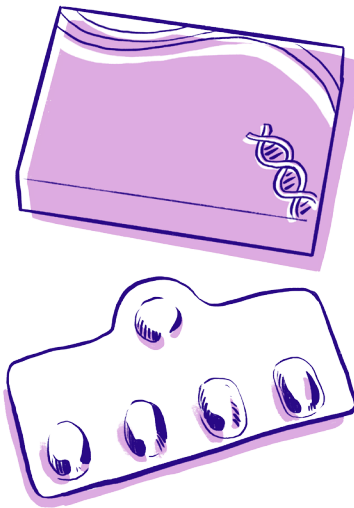
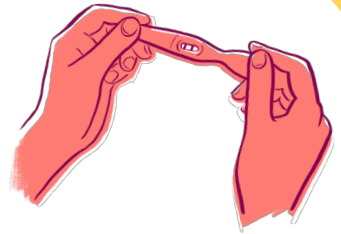
Marie Stopes Nepal can also provide more information for free through its two helplines:

NTC-16600119756

Ncell-9801119756

A social media page of Visible Impact on Safe Abortion- Who Decides?

<https://www.facebook.com/RightOverMyBodyWhoDecides/>



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