

- You should use a **back-up method such as condoms** for 7 days (1 week) after starting birth control pills, a patch, or a ring so that your method has time to start working.
- You may go to work or school the day after your procedure, as long as you take it easy.
- Nausea (feeling sick to your stomach) usually goes away within 24 hours.
- Your breasts may be tender for up to 1 week. Wearing a bra for support or using ice packs may help. Milky breast discharge may last for a couple of weeks. See your primary health care provider if these symptoms do not go away.

## Questions

- If you have questions after your procedure, please call the nurse at 902-473-7072 from 7 a.m. to 3 p.m., Monday to Friday. You will need to leave your name and a number to call back.
- **All voicemail messages are confidential. We will return your call as soon as possible. Your conversations with the nurse and counsellor are private and confidential.**
- You can also call the self referral line toll-free at 1-833-352-0719 or visit [www.nshealth.ca/abortion](http://www.nshealth.ca/abortion)

## Feedback

To help us improve patient care, please send us your anonymous feedback by completing our survey. We recommend waiting at least 2 weeks before sending your feedback: <http://bit.ly/TPUSurvey>

### Support

Remember that you are not alone. After your procedure, you may have many emotions. **If you would like to talk with someone, please call our counsellor at 902-473-4078.** This service is free.

# After Your Procedure

Nova Scotia  
Choice Clinic

*Prepared by: Nova Scotia Choice Clinic  
Designed by: Nova Scotia Health Library Services*

The information in this brochure is for informational and educational purposes only. The information is not intended to be and does not constitute health care or medical advice. If you have any questions, please ask your health care provider.

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The information in this pamphlet is to be updated every 3 years or as needed.

## Post-procedure instructions

1. You must have a responsible adult take you home by car. You will not be allowed to walk home, drive yourself home, or take a bus or taxi. You should also have someone stay with you at home and care for you for 24 hours (1 day). This is for your safety.
2. For 24 hours after your procedure:
  - Do not drive a car or operate heavy machinery.
  - Do not make any important decisions, or sign any legal documents or important papers.
  - Do not drink any alcohol for 24 hours, or while taking pain medication.
  - Do not act as a caregiver for others (children or family members). Plan for help before your procedure, if needed.
  - Do not exercise or play sports. Do not do any heavy lifting.
  - Eat as you normally would, and rest when you feel tired.
3. Your nurse will tell you what your blood type is before you leave the hospital. If you are Rh negative, your nurse will give you an injection. Your nurse will explain why you need this injection.

### Call your primary health care provider if you have:

- Fever over 38° C/100.4° F
- Bad-smelling vaginal discharge
- Bad cramping in your lower abdomen (stomach area) that does not go away with 1 or 2 doses of extra strength acetaminophen (Tylenol®) (2 tablets every 4 to 6 hours), your usual pain reliever, or a hot pack
- Heavy bleeding (soaking more than 2 pads per hour for 2 hours in a row). **Call right away if you have light-headedness, dizziness, or a very fast heartbeat (feeling like your heart is racing) while you are bleeding.**

If you cannot reach your primary health care provider, go to the nearest Emergency Department.

### Preventing infection

- You will get 2 antibiotic pills (doxycycline) in the recovery room. If you are allergic to doxycycline, you will get another antibiotic. If you cannot take them before you leave the hospital, your nurse will tell you when to take them.

- Use a UVA sunscreen for the next 3 to 4 days.
- **Do not** put anything into your vagina (like tampons) for 2 days after your procedure.
- Swimming, showering, and bathing are OK if your bleeding is light and your cramps are getting better.

### What to expect after you go home

- You may have bleeding like your regular period, pass blood clots, have light bleeding or spotting, or not have any bleeding for days. You may also have period-like cramps at times. You may have bleeding for 2 to 3 weeks.
- You may take ibuprofen (Advil® , Midol®) or acetaminophen (Tylenol®) to help with the pain.
- You should have your next period in about 4 to 6 weeks. This period is often heavier and crampier than your regular periods. Your body is resetting after your procedure.
- You will ovulate (release an egg from your ovary) about 2 weeks after your procedure. This means you can get pregnant if you have sex. **Start using birth control as soon as possible after your procedure.**