

Abortion: Terminating a Pregnancy

Factsheet by  HEART

Questions to ask yourself when trying to decide to terminate:



- If you have received a concerning diagnosis and the doctor is recommending termination, what **medical information** do you need to understand the full scope of the diagnosis?
 - For example, consider getting a variety of perspectives: from obstetricians to pediatricians, genetic counselors and other specialists who can provide you with the necessary context of what to expect if you choose to take the pregnancy to passing in the womb or term vs. terminate.



- If you want to gain a deeper understanding of whether your decision is aligned with your **religious and spiritual values**, consider seeking an opinion from a trusted spiritual guide (or several!).



- Does the **geography** of where you live and the **sociopolitical context** factor into your decision?
 - Some states have stricter laws around abortion, and at what point into the pregnancy it is no longer legal to get an abortion.
 - Do you live in a rural area where safe and affordable access to abortions is limited?
 - Look up the **current regulations and travel options** at <https://states.gutmacher.org>.

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Questions to ask yourself when trying to decide to terminate:



- Do you have access to the necessary insurance or funds you need to seek an abortion?
 - If not, explore options available for abortion funds at <https://abortionfunds.org/need-abortion/>



- Who are **your people**? Who are your trusted family and friends that can hold space with you as you make a decision around terminating a pregnancy, without judgment, and with full trust in you that you know best? Is it possible to **journal to yourself**?



- How will the decision impact your **personal mental, spiritual, and physical health**? Would it help to discuss what anxieties you are holding around the decision and discuss potential scenarios with a trained mental health professional?



- What **support** do you need moving forward, whether postpartum after a full term pregnancy, or postpartum after termination? Explore our recommendations in our "Planning an Abortion: Recovery" Handout.

Abortion: Medical and Surgical

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Induced Abortion Breakdown

first trimester

- **timeframe:** can be performed up to 13 weeks.
- **medical abortion:** drugs taken orally or inserted vaginally through suppositories to induce an abortion - can be taken at home with visits to a provider afterwards. Average Cost: \$551
- **surgical abortion - suction curettage:** cervix is dilated prior to or at the time of the procedure using medication or dilators. Once dilated, a thin plastic tube with a suction/vacuum is inserted into the uterus to remove the pregnancy. Average Cost at 10 weeks: \$549

second trimester

- **timeframe:** performed after 13 weeks of pregnancy.
- **medical abortion:** drugs taken orally, vaginally, injected into the uterus or through IV to induce an abortion - administered in a hospital or clinic setting.
- **surgical abortion - dilation and evacuation (D&E):** outpatient surgery where cervix is dilated, general or regional anesthesia administered for pain relief and fetus is removed through vagina with a suction used for any remaining tissue. Median cost at 20 weeks: \$1670

later abortions

- **timeframe:** performed at or after 21 weeks
- **surgical abortion - dilation and extraction:** cervix is dilated and labor is induced. The fetus is removed. Median Cost: \$1,350

For more information about what to expect from abortion procedures, visit the [National Abortion Federation](#)

Sources:

American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, 2021.

Kaiser Family Foundation, 2021.

Witwer, E., Jones, R. K., Fuentes, L., & Castle, S. K. (2020). Abortion service delivery in clinics by state policy climate in 2017. *Contraception*, X, 2, 100043.

<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.conx.2020.100043>

Planning An Abortion

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Logistics of Getting An Abortion

With the changing landscape of abortion access, we recognize the barriers people will face will continue to grow. We encourage all to consult with abortion hotlines and funds as they plan out their abortion journey. These are some considerations and resources to help you plan an abortion:

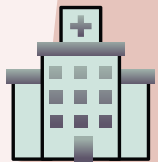
Location + Transportation



If I am in a state with restricted abortion access, where do I need to travel to in order to get an abortion? Check the interactive map [here](#). To get to the closest clinic, how long will it take me? How much gas do I need? There may be abortion funds that can support with arranging transportation.

Clinic Selection

Which providers and clinics offer abortion services? Check [here](#) and [here](#) as a starting point or call a hotline for support. Do clinics in the state where I am accessing an abortion require a [mandatory waiting period](#)?



Housing + Recovery



Do I have a safe place to stay during a waiting period and/or after my abortion? Recovery ranges from days to weeks with regards to bleeding, cramps, and emotional health. Rest as much as possible. Eat warm foods and those that will help you restore energy. Place a hot water pack on your body when you experience cramps. Massage your body and take pain medication as needed.

Funds

How can I pay for this? Check to see if your insurance plan covers abortions and if so, which clinics are covered. For transportation, housing, aftercare, and the procedure itself, create a rough budget. Look up abortion funds [here](#) for support to cover the costs of your abortion.



Abortion: Islamic Rulings

Factsheet by  HEART

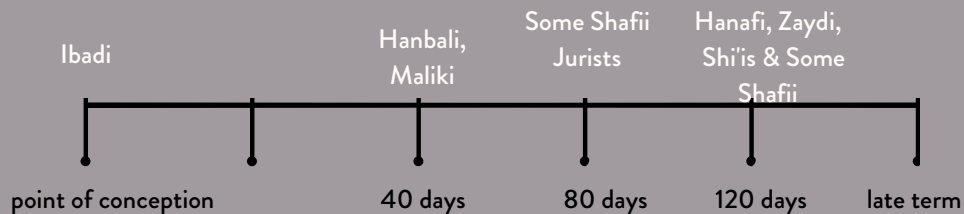
Islamic Rulings: Some Considerations

The rulings regarding the permissibility of abortion across the various madhabs (schools of thought) draw from Quranic verses and various ahadith (sayings of the Prophet (S)) about the stages of creation for a fetus and the sanctity of life.

The ethical considerations that contribute to the rulings around abortion deal with:

The point that the soul enters the fetus

- each madhab determines this differently, but generally it is as follows:



The threat of harm/endangerment to the mother

- this can include physical, emotional and mental health

The presence of fetal anomalies

- this can include chromosomal abnormalities such as:

Trisomy 13 Trisomy 18

The motivation or reasoning to terminate

Sources:

Bowen, D.L. (2006). Reproduction: Abortion and Islam: Overview. Encyclopedia of women & Islamic cultures.

Al-Matary and Ali: Controversies and considerations regarding the termination of pregnancy for Foetal Anomalies in Islam. BMC Medical Ethics 2014 15:10.

Abortion: Applying the RAHMA Principles

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RAHMA Principles

You can apply the HEART RAHMA principles if you are supporting a loved one who is making a decision regarding abortion, has just experienced one, or is disclosing a prior abortion experience.

At the core of RAHMA is showing compassion and holding space for the directly impacted person who is sharing with you. Here is how you can do that:

R

espond by listening

Let the impacted person take lead on the conversation with how they're feeling and what they are thinking about

A

ffirm & believe

Provide validation that their feelings are grounded in truth and their experience is real

H

onor cultural & religious context

Regardless of your own personal religious perspective on the issue, support them with resources that will help them with their decision making in a non-judgemental manner. Hold their values with respect

M

aintain privacy

This is a often personal and private decision that should be kept confidential at all times. Support the impacted person in sharing with who they want to on their own timeline

A

ssist with providing resources

What information are they looking for to make a decision? Can you support them with finding clinics with services? Do they need access to abortion funds? Would they like to connect with a religious leader to talk more about their options?

RESOURCES

ABORTION SUPPORT

National Network of Abortion Funds

National Abortion Federation

Jane's Due Process (Texas)

Exhale (Post Abortion Care)

All-Options

ReproCare Healthline

HEART Reproductive Justice Fund

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Guttmacher Institute (Interactive Travel Map, Resources and Analysis on Abortion Bans)

Kaiser Family Foundation (Abortion Statistics and Policies)

Planned Parenthood (What to expect, Find a Clinic)

Center for Reproductive Rights (Litigation, Policy Advocacy)

EXTERNAL READINGS

Bowen, D. L. 2006. "Reproduction: Abortion and Islam – Overview." Encyclopedia of Women and Islamic Cultures, Volume III: Family, Body, Sexuality and Health. Leiden and Boston: Brill

Mattson, Ingrid. "Gender and Sexuality in Islamic Bioethics." Islamic Bioethics: Current Issues and Challenges. 2018.

Al-Matary and Ali: Controversies and considerations regarding the termination of pregnancy for Foetal Anomalies in Islam. BMC Medical Ethics 2014 15:10.

Zucker, Jessica. Why so many women are forced to lie about terminating wanted pregnancies. 13 Oct 2020. Available at: <https://www.instyle.com/beauty/health-fitness/terminating-pregnancy-for-medical-reasons>. Content warning for pregnancy loss and termination.