

# SELF MANAGED ABORTION



## WHAT IS SELF MANAGED ABORTION

A self managed abortion (SMA) is when an individual performs their own abortion outside of a medical setting. SMAs often involve two FDA approved medications: mifepristone, which blocks the hormone necessary to continue pregnancy, followed by misoprostol 24-48 hours later, which induces contractions and terminates the pregnancy. This pill combination is 95% effective in ending pregnancies less than 12 weeks.

## ARE SMAs LEGAL?

Three states - Oklahoma, South Carolina, and Nevada - explicitly make SMAs illegal. But even in states that do not explicitly criminalize SMAs, there is still some legal risk because prosecutors have charged people with different crimes for ending their own pregnancies - event though the charges are likely unconstitutional.

Around two dozen people are known to have been arrested for having a SMA. Low income individuals, immigrants, and people of color are at the greatest risk of being targeted for prosecution. If you have a question about SMA and the law, contact the Repro Legal Helpline.

## ARE SMAs SAFE?

Yes! SMAs are safer than some over the counter drugs like Tylenol. Approximately 95% of patients who have a SMA before 10 weeks do not need any follow-up medical care and experience only mild symptoms such as bleeding, cramping, and pain.

## HOW DO I GET MIFEPRISTONE + MISOPROSTOL?

It is important to make sure your medications come from a safe and trustworthy source. Plan C is an organization and website that provides comprehensive information applicable to individuals in every state, including where to acquire a prescription for the medications. In some cases, the prescription can be obtained from a tele-health visit, and the medications arrive in the mail a few days later.

The total cost of the medications can range from anywhere between \$40 and \$600, with online or tele-health abortion clinics generally being most affordable. Insurance coverage varies wildly, but providers typically also accept self-pay.

## HYPOTHETICAL: HAVING AN SMA IN GA

M lives in Atlanta and is 7 weeks pregnant. M searches [plancpills.org](http://plancpills.org) and selects an online pharmacy such as Generic Abortion Pills. After paying \$160 plus shipping and waiting approximately two weeks, M receives their medications in the mail without a prescription from a medical provider. M takes the medication and has a SMA around 9 weeks (Note: to minimize your legal risk, please consult with an abortion hotline for advice before making a purchase.)

## WHO CAN I ASK FOR HELP?

Repro Legal Helpline -  
online or leaving a voicemail  
at 844-868-2812

Miscarriage and Abortion  
Hotline -

call or text 833-246-2632

Reprocare Healthline -  
call or text 833-226-7821

## I HAVE MORE QUESTIONS!

**Should I call out sick from work/school?** This decision is up to you. SMAs are very safe, and your chance of complications are low. You may experience pain and discomfort, however, and feel the need to take time to rest.

**What should I do with the abortion tissue?** An abortion very early in pregnancy will resemble a heavy period and likely result in tissue that can be flushed. Abortions after 8 weeks are more likely to have larger clots; if they cannot be flushed, check if your state has any laws regarding disposal of bodily tissue.

**Will my partner/parents/doctor know I had an abortion?** No. An SMA resembles an early term miscarriage. There is no test for a medical provider to know whether someone took abortion pills or miscarried. Sometimes, people in your life may find out from your search history, email, or other digital traces. If privacy is a concern for you, use a virtual private network or other privacy technologies.

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IF/WHEN/HOW RJ FELLOW, SPARK RJ NOW