

Miscarriage Treatment: Medication

There are certain pills that can help an early miscarriage end faster. These are called misoprostol (also known as Cytotec) and mifepristone. You have two choices: you can either take mifepristone and misoprostol together or you can just take misoprostol by itself.

Is it safe?

Yes, using pills is a safe way to complete a miscarriage. Using pills does not lower your chance of getting pregnant again.

How do I take it?	
If you are taking misoprostol only:	
When do I take it?	Choose a good time to use the misoprostol pills. You can use the pills in the day or night. Choose a time when you have had a good meal and plenty of rest.
How do I take it?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Swallow ibuprofen (800 mg total) 1 hour before you take the misoprostol. This will help decrease your cramps. Wash your hands. You may choose to use either method below: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lie down and place 4 misoprostol pills in your vagina. Continue to lie down for 30 minutes. After lying down for 30 minutes, you can move around as usual. If the tablets come out after 30 minutes, it is okay. Your body has absorbed the medication. <p style="text-align: center;">Or:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Place 4 misoprostol pills between your cheek and gums and allow them to dissolve for 30 minutes. Swallow any fragments that are left. Each misoprostol pill contains 200 micrograms. If you do not start to bleed within 24 hours, you can take another dose of 4 pills.
How well does it work?	If you take just misoprostol, it works about 70 out of 100 times (70%).

How do I take it?	
If you are taking both misoprostol and mifepristone:	
When do I take it?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. If you are taking mifepristone it will be dispensed in clinic (you cannot get it from a pharmacy). You have to take it at least 24 hours before the next step. 2. Choose a good time to use the misoprostol pills. You can use the pills in the day or night. Choose a time when you have had a good meal and plenty of rest.
How do I take it?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Swallow ibuprofen (800 mg total) 1 hour before you take the misoprostol. This will help decrease your cramps. 4. Wash your hands. You may choose to use either method below: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lie down and place 4 misoprostol pills in your vagina. Continue to lie down for 30 minutes. After lying down for 30 minutes, you can move around as usual. If the tablets come out after 30 minutes, it is okay. Your body has absorbed the medication. <p style="text-align: center;">Or:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Place 4 misoprostol pills between your cheek and gums and allow them to dissolve for 30 minutes. Swallow any fragments that are left. • Each misoprostol pill contains 200 micrograms. If you do not start to bleed within 24 hours, you can take another dose of 4 pills.
How well does it work?	Misoprostol and mifepristone pills work 80-90 out of 100 times (80% - 90%).

What are the side effects?

- Cramping and bleeding with clots: The cramps and bleeding may be much more than you get with a period.
 - The cramps usually start 2-4 hours after you insert the pills and may last 3-5 hours.

- The heavy bleeding is not risky. It means the treatment is working. The bleeding often lasts 1-2 weeks, and may stop and start a few times.
- Nausea, diarrhea, or chills: These symptoms should get better a few hours after using the pills.

What can I take for pain?

- **Medicine:**
 - Take ibuprofen (Motrin or Advil) 800 mg every 8 hours as needed for pain. Take this with food to avoid an upset stomach.
 - Your provider may have given you acetaminophen (Tylenol) with codeine or hydrocodone: follow the direction on the label. Take only if your pain is not well controlled with ibuprofen alone.
- **Comfort:** A hot pack may help with cramps. You can also drink some hot tea. Rest in a soothing place.

What if it takes too long or doesn't work?

If it doesn't work or you feel it is taking too long, you can return for a procedure or try the misoprostol pills again.

When should I call or return to my health care provider?

- If the bleeding becomes very heavy and soaks through more than 2 maxi pads per hour for 2 hours in a row
- If you have a fever over 101°F (38.3°C)
- If you start to feel very ill

Let your providers know if you need help. No question is too small. Your provider knows this may be a tough time for you and you have received a lot of instructions. If you forget something, call your provider.

Keep a follow-up appointment with your provider.

How soon can I get pregnant again?

You can get pregnant soon after the miscarriage is over. If you want to try again, take a prenatal vitamin daily. If you are not ready to be pregnant at this time, please come to your provider for your birth control options.

Feelings after miscarriage

Please understand that **nothing you did caused the miscarriage**. A miscarriage is nature's way of ending a pregnancy that would not be healthy. Miscarriage is **not** caused by stress, sports, food, or sex. Sometimes families and friends don't know what to say. If you feel very upset, you may want to talk to a counselor.

Source: Reproductive health access project (CC BY-NC-SA 4.0). Access at: www.reproductiveaccess.org

Disclaimer: This document contains information and/or instructional materials developed by Michigan Medicine for the typical patient with your condition. It may include links to online content that was not created by Michigan Medicine and for which Michigan Medicine does not assume responsibility. It does not replace medical advice from your health care provider because your experience may differ from that of the typical patient. Talk to your health care provider if you have any questions about this document, your condition or your treatment plan.

Patient Education by [Michigan Medicine](#) is licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 4.0 International Public License](#). Last Revised 02/2021