



Information about abortion – ending a pregnancy



Published: March 2026

Before you begin



This Easy Read document:

- talks about topics some people might find difficult
- has images that might upset some people.



This information is not meant to scare anyone.



If you are upset after reading this document you can talk to your:

- whānau / family
- friends
- doctor.



This is a long document.



It can be hard to read a document this long.



Some things you can do to make it easier are:

- read it a few pages at a time
- set aside some quiet time to look at it
- have someone read it with you to support you to understand it.



What you will find in here

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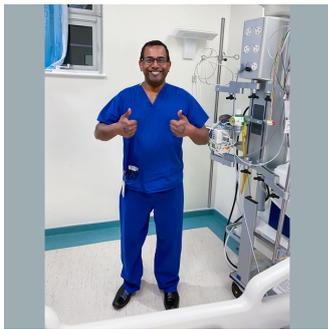
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About this Easy Read



This Easy Read is from Health New Zealand Te Whatu Ora.

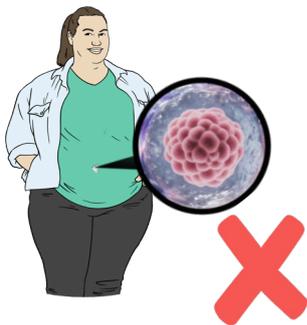
This Easy Read is about **abortion**.



An **abortion** is a safe medical procedure which ends a **pregnancy**.

You can have an abortion if you:

- are pregnant
- and
- do not want to stay pregnant.



How do I know if I am pregnant?



You could be pregnant if you have:

- missed your period

and

- been having penis in vagina sex.



Some other signs that you could be pregnant are:

- you are more tired than usual

- your breasts are:

- sore
- swollen.





Some other signs that you could be pregnant are:



- you feel like throwing up
- you throw up / vomit
- you crave / really want to eat some types of food
- some other types of food make you feel sick
- your mood changes
- you feel **bloated**
- you have cramps like during a period.



Being **bloated** means your stomach feels swollen like you have eaten a lot of food.



You can take a pregnancy test to find out if you are pregnant.

There are 2 main pregnancy tests:



- urine / pee test which is done at home
- blood test which is done by a doctor.



A positive test means you are pregnant.



A negative test means you are not pregnant.



You can buy a pregnancy test at a:

- pharmacy
- supermarket.



If you buy a pregnancy test it will cost between:

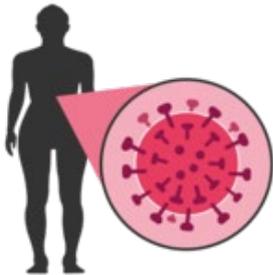
- 8 dollars
- and
- 30 dollars.



You can ask a health professional to support you to get a pregnancy test like a:

- doctor
- nurse
- someone at a **sexual health** clinic like Sexual Wellbeing Aotearoa.





Sexual health is things to do with:

- having sex
- **contraception**
- pregnancy
- infections you can sometimes get from having sex.



Contraception means things to stop you getting pregnant when you have sex like:

- condoms
- the pill.



The Sexual Wellbeing Aotearoa **website** has information about how to know if you are pregnant:

<https://tinyurl.com/5sdc4x2b>

How to find out how many weeks pregnant you are



A health professional can support you to work out how many weeks pregnant you are if you get a pregnancy test with them.



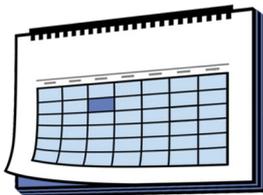
The DECIDE **website** has information on how to work out how many weeks pregnant you are:



<https://tinyurl.com/yknxe345>



The DECIDE website has a **calculator**.

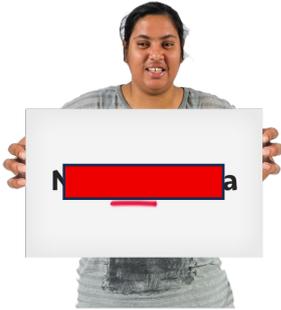


You put the date of the first day of your last period into the calculator.



The information you put in the
DECIDE website is:

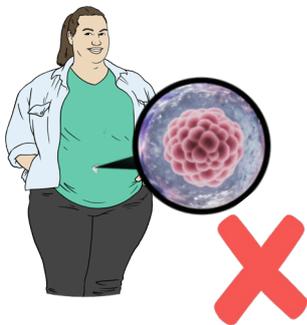
- private which means no one else knows about it
- anonymous which means it does not show who you are.



What are my choices if I am pregnant?



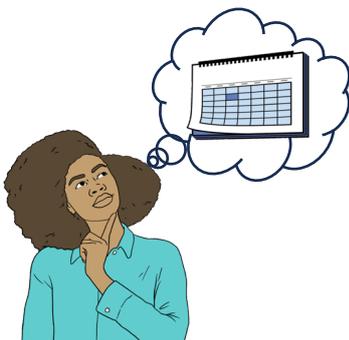
You can choose what you want to do when you know you are pregnant.



You can choose to have an abortion if you do not want to carry on with the pregnancy.



You do not have to tell anyone if you do not want to.



It is usually easier to have an abortion early in the pregnancy.



What if I need help deciding what to do?

You can talk to someone you trust like your:

- partner
- whānau / family
- friends.



You can talk to a health professional like:

- your usual:
 - doctor / GP
 - nurse
- a counsellor at your local sexual health clinic.





If you do not have a doctor you can find 1 to enrol with at this **website**:

<https://tinyurl.com/22hkxkpt>



If you are at school you can talk to the school:

- nurse
- counsellor.



You can talk to someone at Sexual Wellbeing Aotearoa:

www.sexualwellbeing.org.nz/find-a-clinic



You can talk to someone at the DECIDE live chat at this **website**:

www.decide.org.nz/contact-us



You can talk to someone at the
DECIDE National Abortion Telehealth
Service by **phone** on:

0800 332 433



This number does not cost money to
call.



If you find it hard to use the phone
the **New Zealand Relay** service is for
people who are:

- Deaf / hard of hearing
- deafblind
- speech impaired / find it hard to talk.



Deaf



You can find out more about the New
Zealand Relay service at:

www.nzrelay.co.nz

What are the kinds of abortion?



The 2 kinds of abortion in Aotearoa New Zealand are:

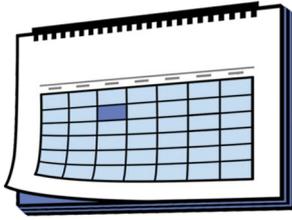
- **medical abortion**
- **surgical abortion.**



A **medical abortion** is when you take medicine to end the pregnancy.



A **surgical abortion** is when a doctor does a small operation to end the pregnancy.



Which abortion you have depends on:

- how many weeks pregnant you are
- your health
- things that have happened to your health in the past
- what abortion services are available where you live.



You might be able to take medicine at home to end the pregnancy if you are 10 weeks pregnant or less.



DECIDE has information about:

- the 2 kinds of abortion
- when each kind of abortion can be used
- how abortion works
- where to get an abortion.



You can learn more about the kinds of abortion from DECIDE:

Phone: 0800 332 433

Website:



www.decide.org.nz/abortion-services/

How much does an abortion cost?



Abortion services are free for most people living in Aotearoa New Zealand.



The health professional who does your abortion will tell you if you need to pay for anything before they do the abortion.



You might need to pay for:

- an ultrasound which is a scan of your stomach area
- the medicines you need to take.





You will have to pay for an abortion if:

- you are not a New Zealand:
 - **citizen**
 - **permanent resident**
- your **working visa** is valid for less than 2 years.

A **New Zealand citizen** is someone who can get a New Zealand passport.

Many New Zealand citizens are born in New Zealand.

Some people who come to live in New Zealand from overseas also become New Zealand citizens.



A **permanent resident** is someone who:

- was not born in New Zealand
- has been told by the Government they can live in New Zealand all the time.



A **working visa** is a type of document that lets a person from another country work in Aotearoa New Zealand for a while.

What are my rights when using abortion services?



Rights are things that the law says every person should:

- have
- be able to do.



Rights are things like:

- having a safe place to live
- getting the healthcare you need.



Getting an abortion is:

- personal
- private.



No one will be told you are having an abortion unless you say it is okay for them to be told.

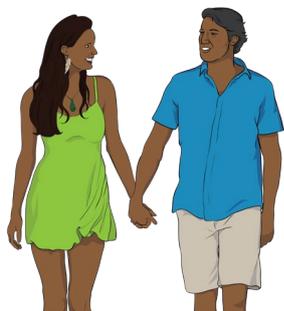
You will be offered **counselling** when you have an abortion.



Here **counselling** means talking to someone who can support people with feelings.



It is your choice if you want to talk to a counsellor about your abortion.



Your whānau / family can come with you for support to the counselling if you want them to.



You can have an abortion at any age.



You need to give **informed consent** to have an abortion.



Informed consent means saying:

- yes to doing something
- and
- you understand what you are doing.



You can go to a place that does abortions without first seeing a:



- doctor
- nurse.



There are different laws for abortions depending on how many weeks pregnant you are.



The law says only a **qualified health practitioner** can do an abortion.



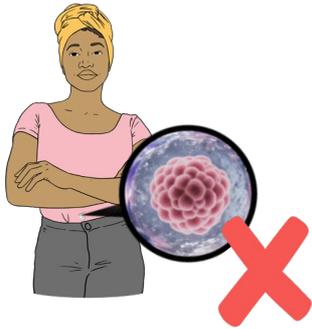
Here **qualified** means a person has the right set of:

- skills
- training.

Here a **qualified health practitioner** is a:

- doctor
- nurse
- **midwife.**





A **midwife** gives healthcare to people who:

- are pregnant
- are giving birth
- have had a baby
- want to have an abortion.



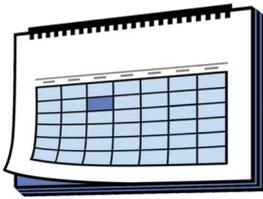
A qualified health professional can do the abortion if you are 20 weeks pregnant or less.



If you are more than 20 weeks pregnant the qualified health professional will need to talk to another qualified health professional.



This is to make sure the abortion is safe to do.



Getting an abortion after 20 weeks does not happen much.



You have the right to be safe when using abortion services.



When you are using abortion services it is against the law for someone to:

- harass / bully you
- intimidate / threaten you.



The only people who can talk to you about your abortion are:

- the medical professionals you choose
- the people you want to know about it.





You can change your mind about having an abortion before you do it.



Health practitioners can choose not to do an abortion because of the way they think about it.



A health practitioner who chooses not to do an abortion must give you information about the nearest abortion service as soon as possible.



You can make a **complaint** about the service you got from an abortion provider.



A **complaint** is when you:

- tell someone there is a problem
- ask them to put things right.



You can make the complaint to the Health and Disability Commissioner by **phone**:

0800 11 22 33



This number does not cost money to call.



You can make the complaint to the Health and Disability Commissioner:

- by **email**:

hdc@hdc.org.nz



- at their **website**:

www.hdc.org.nz/contact-us

DECIDE National Abortion
Telehealth Service



You can find out more about your
abortion rights by calling the DECIDE
National Abortion Telehealth Service
on:

0800 332 433

DECIDE National Abortion
Telehealth Service



You can also find out more about
your abortion rights at the DECIDE
website:

<https://tinyurl.com/4edmn5s7>



You can read the more information
about abortion at the Health New
Zealand Te Whatu Ora website:

<https://tinyurl.com/yknxe345>

Health New Zealand
Te Whatu Ora

This information has been written by Health New Zealand – Te Whatu Ora.


Make it Easy
Kia Māmā Mai

It has been translated into Easy Read by the Make it Easy Kia Māmā Mai service of People First New Zealand Ngā Tāngata Tuatahi.


People First NZ
Ngā Tāngata Tuatahi

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This resource is available via the Abortion Services team on:

abortionservices@tewhatuora.govt.nz