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Health New Zealand
Te Whatu Ora

Summary of Abortion (ending a pregnancy) Information

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Blind Low Vision NZ, Auckland

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Summary of Abortion (ending a pregnancy) Information

If you're pregnant and don't want to stay pregnant, you can choose to have an abortion. An abortion is a safe and common medical procedure which ends a pregnancy. For most people who live in New Zealand, it is free.

The information on this page is a summarised version of the Health New Zealand abortion webpage:

<https://info.health.nz/abortion>

How to know if you're pregnant

To find out if you're pregnant, take a pregnancy test.

You can buy a pregnancy test at a pharmacy or supermarket. These cost between \$8.00 - \$30.00. You can also ask your doctor, nurse or someone at a sexual health clinic, such as Sexual Wellbeing Aotearoa, to help you get a pregnancy test.

Pregnancy testing

The Sexual Wellbeing Aotearoa website provides information about how to know if you are pregnant, including testing. The website information is not in alternative formats, so we have provided a summary of the information below.

<https://sexualwellbeing.org.nz/pregnancy-testing>

- If you've missed your period and been having penis in vagina sex, you could be pregnant.
- Some other signs you might be pregnant include:
 - You're more tired than usual
 - Your breasts are sore or swollen
 - You feel like throwing up or do throw up
 - You crave some food and/or other food makes you feel sick
 - Your mood changes
 - You feel bloated or have period like cramps
- There are two main pregnancy tests
 - Urine test – done at home
 - Blood test – ordered by a doctor
- A positive test means you're pregnant, a negative test means you are not pregnant

Find out how many weeks you have been pregnant

The DECIDE website provides information about how to find out how many weeks you have been pregnant. The website is not in alternative formats. You can use the DECIDE calculator to work out how many weeks you are pregnant by putting into the tool the date of the first day of your last period. The information you enter is private and anonymous. The pregnancy calculator is just for general

information. It gives an estimate and doesn't replace a pregnancy test or advice from a nurse, doctor, or midwife.

<https://www.decide.org.nz/am-i-pregnant>

What are your choices?

Once you know you are pregnant, you can choose what to do.

You can decide to have an abortion if you don't want to carry on with the pregnancy. This is your choice. You don't have to tell your partner, whānau (family), or friends.

It's usually easier to have an abortion earlier in the pregnancy.

Needing help deciding?

Talk to someone you trust

You can talk with someone you trust such as a partner, a friend, or a whānau (family) member about what you want to do. But you don't have to tell anyone about your pregnancy or abortion if you don't want to – it's your choice.

Talk to a health professional

Some health professionals you can talk to are:

- Your regular Doctor or Nurse

- Someone at Sexual Wellbeing Aotearoa
<https://sexualwellbeing.org.nz/find-a-clinic>
- the National Abortion Telehealth Service (DECIDE)
Call [0800 332 433](tel:0800332433)
- If you are Deaf, hard of hearing, deafblind, speech impaired, or find it hard to talk, you can use the New Zealand Relay Service. www.nzrelay.co.nz
- the DECIDE Live Chat
<https://www.decide.org.nz/contact-us>
- abortion services at Health New Zealand via email
abortionervices@tewhatuora.govt.nz.

If you do not have a doctor, you can find one to enrol with here:

Find a GP — <https://www.healthpoint.co.nz>

If you are at school, the school nurse or counsellor can help you.

You can also talk to a counsellor at your local sexual health clinic. This is free for most people who live in New Zealand.

Find an abortion provider —
<https://www.decide.org.nz/find-a-provider>

Your rights when using abortion services

Getting an abortion is something that is personal and private.

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

Counselling must be offered to you. You don't have to talk to a counsellor to get an abortion, but you can if you want to. Your whānau (family) can come with you to counselling to support if you want them to.

You can find out more about your rights at the **DECIDE** – the National Abortion Telehealth Service website below, or call [0800 332 433](tel:0800332433). You can use NZ Relay to call this number.

The DECIDE website provides information about abortion and your rights. The website information is not in alternative formats, so we have provided a summary of the information below.

<https://www.decide.org.nz/abortion-and-your-rights>

- you can have an abortion at any age
- you need to give informed consent to have an abortion – this means you understand what will happen and agree to it.

- you can use an abortion provider without having to see a doctor or nurse first.
- There are different laws for abortions depending on how many weeks pregnant you are
 - If you are up to and including 20 weeks pregnant, a qualified health practitioner (such as midwives, nurses and doctors) can do the abortion
 - If you are over 20 weeks pregnant, the qualified health practitioner will need to talk with a second qualified health practitioner to help decide if an abortion is a safe thing to do. Abortions after 20 weeks are very rare.
 - It is against the law for anyone other than a qualified health practitioner to provide an abortion.
- you have the right to be safe when using abortion services. It is against the law for anyone to harass, intimidate, or try to talk with you about abortion when you are going to, or using, abortion services.
- you can change your mind about having an abortion before it takes place.
- Health practitioners can choose not to provide abortion services because of their own views. They must provide you with the contact details of the nearest abortion service as early as they can.
- If you want to make a complaint about the service you received through an abortion provider, you can do so through the Health and Disability Commission.

- You can contact the Health and Disability Commission by calling [0800 11 22 33](tel:0800112233). You can use NZ Relay to call this number.
- You can also email: hdc@hdc.org.nz or visits their website: <https://www.hdc.org.nz/contact-us>

Types of abortion

There are two types of abortion in Aotearoa New Zealand:

- Medical abortion – you take medicine to end the pregnancy.
- Surgical abortion – a doctor does a small operation to end the pregnancy.

Which one you can have depends on:

- how many weeks you are pregnant
- your health and your medical history
- what services are available where you live

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

You can learn more on the DECIDE website linked below or you can CALL [0800 332 433](tel:0800332433) - You can use NZ Relay to call this number.

They can help you with information about:

- the two types of abortion

- when each type can be used
- how abortion works
- where to get an abortion

<https://www.decide.org.nz/abortion-types>

How much does an abortion cost?

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

You might need to pay for:

- an ultrasound, which scans your stomach area
- the medicines you need to take

You will also have to pay for an abortion if:

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

The health care practitioner who does your abortion will tell you if you have to pay for anything before they do the abortion.

End of Summary of Abortion (ending a pregnancy) Information

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This resource is available via the Abortion Services team on:

abortionservices@tewhatuora.govt.nz