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fwhc.org  
CedarRiverClinics.org  
Birth-Control-Comparison.info

## After A Surgical Abortion

**If you have questions or concerns regarding your procedure and were seen at Cedar River Clinics, call us: 800-572-4223.**

**BLEEDING & CRAMPING** - is normal for up to 8 weeks. Use maxi pads so you can monitor your bleeding. No bleeding is also normal. Uterine Massage can decrease cramping. To perform uterine massage, use the heel of your hand and push inward firmly on your abdomen while rubbing in a downward motion, from your naval to your pubic hair line. The purpose of uterine massage is to stimulate your uterus to contract back to its pre-pregnant size. Massage may cause more bleeding as your body passes clots that it needs to pass for the cramping to stop. If you experience severe cramps that are not relieved with medication, please contact us.

- If you soak more than 1 pad an hour for more than 2 hours or pass large clots, call the clinic immediately.
- Avoid aspirin, alcohol and marijuana. These substances may cause heavier bleeding.
- Avoid heavy lifting or strenuous activity for 2 weeks.

**TENDER BREASTS** - Some women experience breast engorgement. If your breasts are painful or you have secretion, bind them tightly with a wide ace bandage. Ice packs may be used (for 10 minutes every half hour). Avoid stimulation such as hot water from a shower or touching or kissing. Pregnancy symptoms should subside within one week.

**PREGNANCY** - Ovulation can occur at any time after an abortion. Use birth control method to prevent future pregnancy. If you are starting birth control pills, use a back up method (condoms, spermicides, abstinence) with the first cycle of pills. To learn more about birth control options, see the Birth Control Comparison Chart at [www.Birth-Control-Comparison.info](http://www.Birth-Control-Comparison.info).

**PREVENT INFECTION** - Your cervix may be open for 1-2 weeks. To reduce the risk of infection:

- Take your antibiotics as directed. Check your temperature daily for one week. If your temperature is 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit or more, call the clinic immediately.
- Do not have intercourse, take a tub bath, douche or go swimming for 1-2 weeks, as specified. You may shower or kneel down in a bath tub and sponge off.
- Do not use tampons until your next period (in 4-8 weeks).
- Get some rest, drink fluids (water, juice).
- We recommend a follow-up exam in 3-4 weeks.

**EMOTIONS** - A wide range of feelings is normal, including relief, sadness, anger, renewal. You'll feel better if you talk with someone you trust. Call these confidential toll-free talk-lines: 866-439-4253 or 888-493-0092. Read personal stories and share yours at [www.FWHC.org](http://www.FWHC.org). **You are not alone - one in three** American women has an abortion.

**WOMEN KNOW** - We have an abortion to take responsibility for ourselves, our futures and our families. All women deserve freedom and support when making this important life decision. Yet the right to abortion could be taken away. Good government policies depend upon input from people who understand. Vote. Take Action. Speak Out. Tell your story. Ask questions. End the silence. Work together with other women to preserve access.