

# What Is and What Is NOT an Abortion?



## What Is an Abortion?

An abortion is the intentional killing of an unborn child in a woman's womb. There are various methods of abortion, but the objective is always to deliberately terminate the pregnancy by ending the life of the unborn child.

In Michigan, abortion is legal through all nine months of pregnancy for any reason. As a result of Proposal 3 passing in November 2022, a "right" to abortion is now in the Michigan state constitution. The following is an overview of abortion methods based on gestational age.

Before  
**10**  
weeks

### **Medical Abortion: Mifepristone & Misoprostol**

The first drug, mifepristone, blocks the hormone progesterone. The second drug, misoprostol, is taken 1-2 days later and causes uterine contractions.

Before  
**12**  
weeks

### **Surgical Abortion: Suction Curettage**

A small tube is inserted into the uterus and a suction machine removes all uterine contents. The procedure typically lasts less than 15 minutes and patients return home the same day.

Between  
**12-24**  
weeks

### **Surgical Abortion: Dilation & Evacuation**

The cervix is dilated and then grasping forceps are introduced into the uterus to remove parts of the fetus; other instruments are used to remove the placenta and other pregnancy tissue. The procedure typically lasts less than 30 minutes and patients return home the same day.

Between  
**16-40**  
weeks

### **Medical Abortion: Labor Induction**

Similar to childbirth, labor is induced with drugs. Sometimes an injection is made to stop the fetus' heart before birth. Like birth, patients could expect to stay in the hospital for a few days.

## What Is NOT an Abortion?

### **Miscarriage**

A miscarriage is the natural death of an unborn child due to medical or genetic issues or for no known reason. It is never an intentional termination of the pregnancy. Treating a miscarriage is not classified as an abortion, and there are no laws that prevent such treatment in the country.

There are some cases of miscarriage in which a deceased baby is not expelled from the woman's womb naturally, necessitating medical or surgical intervention. According to BC Women's Hospital and Health Centre, it is estimated that one in four miscarriages require such treatment. While many of the medical tools used for miscarriage treatment are also used in an abortion, the procedure is not an abortion. Such a surgery is done to remove the unborn child who has already died, not to deliberately end its life.

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## What Is NOT an Abortion?

### Miscarriage Cont.

There are rare cases in which a woman is in the process of miscarrying and the baby's heart has not stopped beating. If this causes the woman's life to be in jeopardy, doctors are obligated to intervene to save the life of the pregnant woman. If both the woman and the baby cannot be saved, standard medical practice is to prioritize the life of the woman. **Every state's abortion law contains an exception for the life of the mother, and all credible prolife organizations have a life of the mother exception for abortion.**

### Ectopic Pregnancy

An ectopic pregnancy occurs when a fertilized egg implants and grows outside of the woman's uterus. It most commonly occurs in the fallopian tube but can also happen in the abdomen, cervix, or ovary.

An ectopic pregnancy is often life-threatening and can never lead to a live birth. Treatment for an ectopic pregnancy falls under the life of the mother exception and is excluded from the definition of abortion in many states.

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Knowing the difference between an abortion and these pregnancy treatments is important so that a woman experiencing a complication beyond her control like a miscarriage or ectopic pregnancy can get the help she needs without thinking she is getting an abortion.

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## Pregnant? Want help?

Call or text 1-800-712-HELP



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