

Abortion

Patient Information – Gynaecology Services

The Gynaecology Procedure Unit provides abortion services to the women of Canterbury and West Coast. It is located at Christchurch Hospital.

The decision to have an abortion is a personal choice. It can be a difficult or stressful time in a person's life. It is important to have accurate information and support during this time, so you can make the right decision for you.

The Gynaecology Procedure Unit offers you professional support during this time, which is unbiased and non-judgmental consisting of medical, nursing care and counselling advice.

I am not sure what to do?

Pre-decision making counselling is available, to help you reach the right decision for you. You can see your GP or phone the Gynaecology Procedure Unit (03) 378 6386 to make an appointment with a counsellor.

You do not need to be referred for pre-decision making counselling.

How do I make an appointment?

You can contact your GP for a referral appointment or phone the Gynaecology Procedure Unit (03) 378 6386 to make an appointment. If your phone call goes to voice message, please leave your name and contact details.

You will need to have a blood test and in most cases an ultrasound scan before you can come in for your appointment.

What happens at the appointment?

- You can see a counsellor, if you would like to. Counselling can provide emotional support, information and refer you to other services if needed. More counselling sessions can be provided either before or after an abortion.
- You will see a clinic doctor, they will discuss the options for an abortion with you and answer any questions you have.

Abortion procedures available at the Gynaecology Procedure Unit

Early medical abortion

- For women who are less than nine weeks pregnant, the 'abortion pill' may be used to end the pregnancy and cause the pregnancy tissue to be passed as vaginal bleeding.
- You will need to take two different medications, on two separate days
- You will need to have a support person at home with you, after you take the second medication.
- The first medication (Mifepristone) will be given to you at the Gynaecology Procedure Unit.
- The second medication (Misoprostol) will be given to you to take at home 24-48 hours later.
- You will pass the pregnancy tissue, as vaginal bleeding. This may be painful like a severe period. You will be given a prescription for pain medications, for most women this usually takes between four and eight hours.

- If you have not passed the pregnancy tissue after 4 hours, you will then take the other misoprostol tablets you have been given.
- It is normal to have light bleeding for five to six weeks following the procedure
- After five days you will have a blood test and we recommend a follow up appointment with your GP.

Surgical abortion

- For women who are between six and thirteen weeks pregnant. This is a procedure using suction to remove the pregnancy tissue.
- You will be awake during the procedure and will have drugs for pain relief and to help you relax.
- In the operating room the doctor will dilate (open) your cervix to approximately 1 cm and use suction to remove the pregnancy tissue from the uterus. A nurse will be with you during the procedure.
- Once the procedure is finished you will need to stay and rest for about an hour.
- You will not be able to drive home, so you will need to organise transport.

What is the cost?

Abortion services are provided at no cost to NZ citizens and residents.

The cost to non-residents is approximately \$1936 This does not include scans or cost of additional treatment. For further information on costs please phone Christchurch Hospital accounts (03) 364 0092.

Can I bring a support person?

You are welcome to bring a member of your family/whānau or a friend with you for support. Please do not bring more than two support people, due to lack of space.

Please note: Children are not allowed in the Gynaecology Procedure Unit ward area and there are no childcare facilities at the Gynaecology Procedure Unit. You will need to arrange childcare on all your appointment days.

Interpreter

If you need an interpreter for your appointment, please discuss with us when you phone to make your appointment or advise your GP at your referral appointment.

Getting home

You cannot drive yourself home after a surgical abortion, due to the medications you have had. Please make arrangements for your transport home, with a support person.

If you are unable to keep your appointment or no longer require it, we appreciate 24 hours' notice of cancellation. This gives us the opportunity to give the appointment time to someone else.

Location of the Gynaecology Procedure Unit

Riverside Block, 4th floor, Christchurch Hospital, 2 Riccarton Ave Phone (03) 378 6386

8.00 am – 4.00 pm Monday to Thursday