

At the start of the operation the doctor will give you intravenous anaesthetic medications. These drugs will make you feel relaxed, comfortable and into a sleep-like state. You will be totally unaware of anything during the procedure and you will not remember anything about it afterwards.

This type of anaesthesia is considerably safer than general anaesthesia and your recovery time will be more rapid. Approximately one hour.

You may experience some mild cramping, similar to period pain, after your operation. This will settle within about one hour and if necessary, you will be given some pain relief medication.

Costs

If you have a Medicare card, Medicare covers much of the cost however there will be an out of pocket expense. Please feel free to call the clinic for details of our fees. We accept cash, EFTPOS or credit card payments.

Legal information

In New South Wales, it is lawful for a doctor to terminate a pregnancy if he/she believes that it is necessary to protect a woman's physical or mental health. A woman's social, financial or medical conditions may be taken into consideration.

Common questions

Will my future fertility be affected? Under normal circumstances, when performed by an experienced doctor, and you follow all of your post-operative instructions carefully, your fertility will not be affected. In fact a D & C can sometimes increase your chances of falling pregnant afterwards.

Will I be able to work the next day? Most women feel well immediately after the procedure and are well enough to work the following day. Very occasionally, additional treatment may be necessary in the days after the procedure.

Patients should not swim, take baths, have intercourse or use tampons for two weeks after the procedure. Showers are okay.

How much bleeding should I expect afterwards?

Bleeding can be variable after a termination. Some women bleed for only a day and some will have bleeding for over a week. It is not unusual for heavier bleeding and cramping to occur about 4 to 5 days after the procedure as your uterus naturally sheds its lining. This will settle again, by itself, in a few days. Under normal circumstances, bleeding should not be more than a normal heavy period.

Will my parents or family find out? The Private Clinic will not send receipts or letters to your home unless directed by you. If any medical follow-up is required which necessitates us phoning you, we refrain from revealing the nature of the matter to anyone but yourself. If you are on your partner's or parent's Medicare card, Medicare will not release details of any treatment to anyone other than you.

Do I need a referral from my local doctor? A referral is not essential but if you do have a letter from your doctor or an ultrasound report, please bring it with you if you attend the clinic.

What are the medical risks? These days, the medical risks are greatly reduced when the procedure is performed by an experienced doctor and with careful follow-up. Having the procedure carried out as early as possible reduces the chances of having complications. However even a termination in the second trimester carries fewer risks than continuing a pregnancy to term. The doctor will discuss the risks with you during the consultation prior to the procedure and will answer any questions that you have.

Can my partner accompany me? Your partner may accompany you to the clinic, however as we wish to maintain a private environment for all of our patients, we do not allow partners into the theatre or the recovery areas. We also request that patients and their partners do not bring young children or babies to the clinic.

Can I have an IUD fitted? Depending on your circumstances, it is sometimes possible to fit an IUD during the procedure. Discuss this with the clinic staff when making your appointment.

How long will I be at the clinic? Normally, patients can expect to be at the clinic from 2 to 3 hours. If you are over 12 weeks, your appointment may be longer.

The
Private
Clinic

We understand your needs

The Private Clinic Woollahra Pty Ltd

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(200m from Central Station)

Tel 02 9690 0000 Fax 02 9690 2505

www.privateclinic.com.au

The
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Unplanned
Pregnancy

Information
for women
who have an
unplanned
pregnancy



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Am I pregnant?

The early symptoms which may indicate that you are pregnant, include a missed period, breast tenderness, nausea or "morning sickness", passing urine more frequently, and lethargy.

Types of tests

If you suspect that you may be pregnant, your next step is to confirm the pregnancy with either a home pregnancy test kit, or a blood test from your local doctor.

The home test kits may be purchased from pharmacies, supermarkets, or we can provide you with a test at The Private Clinic. These tests indicate the presence of pregnancy hormone in your urine and they give accurate results when used at least 10 days after conception (or whenever your period is late) and according to the manufacturers instructions.

Alternatively, your local doctor will be able to perform a blood test which will test for the presence of pregnancy hormone in your blood. These tests are accurate only 5 days after conception but results usually take 12 - 24 hours to be returned.

If your pregnancy may possibly be over 13 weeks, an ultrasound scan may be required to accurately determine the fetal age (gestational age).

How many weeks pregnant am I?

The start of the pregnancy is, by convention, measured by the number of weeks since the first day of your last period. This is abbreviated to LMP (Last Menstrual Period) and is about two weeks earlier than the date of conception.

As an example, if your period is normally a 28 day cycle, and you have missed your period by one week, this would mean that you are now 5 weeks pregnant, (or 5 weeks LMP). Conception would have occurred 3 weeks ago.

Termination of pregnancy may be performed from 5 weeks LMP.

Some women are often further along than they expect. If you don't remember the date of your last period, if your period was lighter or shorter than usual, or if you have any doubt, it may be necessary to have an ultrasound performed to determine how far along your pregnancy is. Your local GP may be able to provide you with a referral to a radiology centre, or we can perform an ultrasound scan at The Private Clinic.

Deciding what to do

Everyone who is facing a pregnancy must answer one basic question: Is this the right time for me to have a child?

No responsibility is as important as raising a child. No decision is greater for a woman than this one.

If you are considering having a baby, start taking extra care of yourself now.

It is not wise to make an appointment to have a termination if you are undecided about your decision. While the decision to terminate a pregnancy is always a difficult one, it is normal for most patients to experience feelings of sadness or guilt despite being completely sure of their decision.

Getting support. Although this decision is yours, or yours and your partner's, you need support.

Some couples come together in making this decision, and some pull apart. The best results occur when both of you can talk honestly about how you feel and listen to each other.

If you choose to have a friend help you with your decision, choose wisely. Ask them to listen, not to tell you what to do. Ask that they not tell anyone else without your permission.

Sometimes you need to talk to someone else outside the situation, someone who understands, who can explain things, and who will listen to you. The Private Clinic can provide you with any information required to assist you with your decision or we can assist you with finding an independent counsellor who can help.

If you decide to contact one of the abortion counselling services listed in the Yellow Pages, you should be aware that most of these services are run by religious groups and do not offer unbiased advice.

If you have decided to terminate your pregnancy, the next step is simply to make an appointment.

Pregnancy Terminations

Current figures indicate that in Australia, one in every three women will have a pregnancy termination at some time in their lives. This procedure is one of the safest that can be performed in a day surgery environment, however all surgical procedures carry risks, however minor.

First trimester (5 - 12 weeks) The medical name of the procedure during the first trimester is called suction curettage, and also "dilatation and curettage" or "D&C".

This is a simple procedure in which your cervix is gently opened with sterile rods called dilators. These are gently inserted into your cervix until it has opened enough (6 - 9 mm) to accommodate a thin plastic tube through which a gentle suction is applied. This suction removes the embryonic sac and the lining of the uterus, called decidua, which accompanies every pregnancy. The procedure normally lasts about 10 minutes.

At The Private Clinic, an ultrasound scan is used to verify the presence and location of the embryonic sac before the operation, and also to verify that it has been successfully removed at the completion of the operation.

Second trimester (13 - 20 weeks) For The Private Clinic offers terminations up to 14 - 16 weeks, depending on your past gynaecological history.

Appointments for these procedures usually last longer than 3 hours. You will be given medication to soften and dilate your cervix. After the medication has taken effect, you will be anaesthetised and the procedure is performed with the assistance of gentle suction.

In order to minimise complications, a trans-vaginal ultrasound scan is performed at the end to ensure that your uterus is empty.

Anaesthesia

Many women are anxious about experiencing pain during their operation. This is a common fear which we fully appreciate and we undertake to ensure that your visit is as stress free and pain free as possible.