

# STANDARDS 4LIFE Abortion

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# 1. What is Abortion?



Abortion: The premature expulsion of the human fetus. It usually refers to an artificially induced abortion caused by surgical or chemical means. A spontaneous abortion is often called a miscarriage.

Abortion in America stops beating hearts more than 1.2 million times each year<sup>1</sup>—our nation’s most common surgical procedure. This tragedy is a symptom of the corruption of the gifts and stewardship responsibilities God has given us.

## First Trimester Development (0-12 Weeks)

Days after last menstrual period	Development of embryo/fetus
18-21	Heart beats <sup>1</sup>
32	Eyes are formed <sup>2</sup>
38	Upper lip formed <sup>2</sup>
40	Brain waves are measurable <sup>3</sup>
44	Arms and legs formed <sup>4</sup>
48	Beginnings of all internal structures present; baby is moving <sup>5</sup>
56	Embryo now called a fetus <sup>5</sup>
63	Sucking thumb, teeth forming <sup>6</sup>
84	Cries, feels pain

**\*\*Most surgical abortions occur between 49 to 70 days\*\*<sup>6</sup>**

## Abortion Methods: First Trimester

- **Dilation and Curettage**

The cervix is dilated with metal dilators to allow the insertion of a loop-shaped steel knife. The developing baby is dismembered by the knife and the placenta is scraped off the inner wall of the uterus. This method is more likely to leave behind tissue and blood clots, which increases the risk of subsequent infection. There is also a higher incidence of blood loss and uterine perforation.

- **Suction Aspiration or “Vacuum Curettage”**

The most common method used in the first trimester. The cervix is dilated and a plastic suction tube with a sharp cutting edge just behind its tip is inserted into the uterus.

The suction curette is connected via a plastic tube to a suction machine. The fetus is dismembered and the placenta is scraped off. The placenta, fetus, amniotic fluid and blood are suctioned out of the uterus.

- **RU-486**

Also called the “French Abortion Pill” since it was first developed there. It is a two- stage procedure using two synthetic hormones - mifepristone (RU-486) and misoprostol. It is used for abortions between the 5th and 7th week and requires multiple trips to the doctor. During the first visit, if the woman has no contraindications (smoking, asthma, high blood pressure, obesity, etc.), she swallows the RU-486. It blocks the actions of naturally occurring progesterone in the woman’s body that sustains the rich nutrient-filled lining of the uterus. This causes the uterine lining, the endometrium, to disintegrate and the baby dies. At a second visit, 36-48 hours later, the woman is given a powerful prostaglandin, misoprostol, which starts uterine contractions to expel the baby and the placenta. Many women abort during a four-hour stay at the clinic. About 30 percent abort up to five days later. If the abortion has not occurred by a third visit, a surgical abortion is required. Side effects are severe: prolonged bleeding, nausea, vomiting, pain and rarely death. Long-term side effects have not been sufficiently studied.



- **Methotrexate**

This is an anticancer drug that attacks fast growing cells in the body by neutralizing folic acid, the vitamin needed for cell division. The embryo and the trophoblast, the tissue around the embryo that becomes the placenta, are rapidly growing. The methotrexate chokes its growth and causes it to disintegrate and kill the growing child. Methotrexate must be injected and also requires giving misoprostol three to seven days afterward to cause the uterus to contract and expel its contents. This is not a popular method because of the time required and the woman may abort days to weeks later. One out of every 25 women requires surgical abortion after methotrexate fails. There is a risk of death even with smaller doses that are used.

## Second Trimester Development<sup>7</sup>

Weeks of age	Development of fetus
13	3 inches long, weighs half oz., reflexes active
14	Fingerprints present
15	Has ability to grasp, smile, grimace, squint
16	6 inches long, weighs 6 oz., somersaults, mother feels movement
17	Gets hiccups, plays with umbilical cord
18	Hair and eyebrows are growing
20	Hears, recognizes mother's voice
22	Responds to stories, music, etc.
24	Weighs 1 lb., has 85 percent survival rate
26	Responds to light, weighs 1.5 to 2 lbs.

## Third Trimester Development<sup>7</sup>

Weeks of age	Development of fetus
24	Weighs 2 lbs. and is practicing breathing
30	Grows rapidly, sleeps 90 percent of time, has dreams
32	Weighs 4 lbs., urinates
34	Weighs 5 lbs., 19.5 in. long, head begins to drop into mother's pelvis
36	Now has 99 percent survival rate
38	Is 1,000 times its original size, gains an ounce a day
40	Average weight: 7.5 lbs.

## Abortion Methods: Second & Third Trimesters

- **Saline Abortion**



Also called "saline amniocentesis," "salting out" and "hypertonic saline" abortion, this method is used after 16 weeks of pregnancy because there needs to be enough amniotic fluid to enable the doctor to get a needle into the amniotic sac. The doctor withdraws 50 to 250 cc of amniotic fluid and injects a concentrated solution of salt. The baby breathes in and swallows the salt, which is poisonous. The baby's skin is burned by the salt as it draws water out of the baby's body. The baby dies within one to two hours, often after violent movements. The mother goes into spontaneous labor in 36 to 72 hours and delivers her shriveled baby. Complications include the salt getting drawn

into the mother's circulation and causing widespread blood clotting and then uncontrollable bleeding. If the salt solution is injected directly into the mother's circulation, it can cause seizures, coma or death. This method is not used much due to its dangers.

- **Urea**

Urea, a concentrated compound of mammalian urine commercially used in the creation of plastics, fertilizers and animal food, is injected. This method is not as effective as saline in killing the baby. Often something must be given to cause the uterus to contract and even so it has a higher incidence of requiring the additional risk of surgery. Side effects include nausea, vomiting and injuries to the cervix.

- **Prostaglandins**

Can be used alone; often results in baby being born alive but too young to survive. It is often used with saline or urea to kill the baby. Risks include a retained placenta, cervical trauma, later infection, bleeding, asthma or hyperthermia (becoming dangerously hot). The most serious complications are a ruptured uterus and cardiac arrest.

- **D & E, or Dilation and Evacuation**

A popular method for second trimester abortions, the cervix is dilated, forceps with sharp metal jaws are inserted and the child is torn apart limb by limb. The head is the largest part of the baby and if it is too large to be pulled through the cervix, it must be crushed. This is a dangerous form of abortion due to the risk of uterine perforation or laceration of the uterus or cervix by sharp bone ends. Bleeding may be severe as well.

- **D & X, or Dilation and Extraction (Partial Birth Abortion)**

Usually done between the 20th and 32nd weeks, which is the period that the child can survive outside the womb. The cervix is dilated with a laminara (dehydrated sea weed) overnight and then the doctor, using ultrasound to visualize the baby, grabs the baby's legs with forceps and pulls it out through the cervix and vaginal canal except for the large after-coming head, which is kept in the uterus. The abortionist then sticks scissors into the base of the baby's head and spreads the tips to kill the baby. The scissors are removed and a suction tip is inserted to suck out the baby's brains, collapse the skull and allow the baby to be delivered dead. This is a safer procedure than a D&E but borders on infanticide.

- **Hysterotomy**

This method is similar to a C-section and is generally used if chemical methods such as salt poisoning or prostaglandins fail. Incisions are made in the abdomen and uterus and the baby, placenta, and amniotic sac are removed. Babies are sometimes born alive during this procedure, raising questions as to how and when these infants are killed and by whom. This method offers the highest risk to the health of the mother, because the potential for rupture during subsequent pregnancies is appreciable. In the first two years of legal abortion in New York State, the death rate from hysterotomy was 271.2 deaths per 100,000 cases.<sup>8</sup>



“It’s hard for most doctors to deliver babies and do abortions. It also has to do with the fact that to almost everyone else the pregnancy is just a blob of tissue, but the abortionist knows exactly what he is doing because he has to count all the parts after each abortion. I never had any doubt that I was killing little people, but somehow I was able to justify and compartmentalize that.” —Kathi Aultman, CMDA member and former abortion provider, before a Senate Judiciary Committee on the “Partial-Birth Abortion Ban Act of 2002”

## 2. What You Should Know

### Abortion in the USA

- ◆ 48 percent of pregnancies among American women are unintended; half of these are terminated by abortion.
- ◆ In 1997, 1.33 million abortions took place, down from an estimated 1.61 million in 1990. From 1973 through 1997, more than 35 million legal abortions occurred.
- ◆ Each year, two out of every 100 women aged 15-44 have an abortion; 47 percent of them have had at least one previous abortion and 55 percent have had a previous birth.
- ◆ An estimated 43 percent of women will have at least one abortion by the time they are 45 years old.
- ◆ Each year, an estimated 46 million abortions occur worldwide. Of these, 20 million procedures are obtained illegally.



### Who’s Having Abortions?

- ◆ 52 percent of U.S. women obtaining abortions are younger than 25. Women aged 20-24 obtain 32 percent of all abortions, and teenagers obtain 20 percent.
- ◆ Black women are more than three times as likely as white women to have an abortion, and Hispanic women are roughly two times as likely.
- ◆ Catholic women are 29 percent more likely than Protestants to have an abortion, but are about as likely as all women nationally to do so.
- ◆ Two-thirds of all abortions are among never-married women.

## Who's Having Abortions? cont'd

- ◆ On average, women give at least three reasons for choosing abortion: three-fourths say that having a baby would interfere with work, school or other responsibilities; about two-thirds say they cannot afford a child; and half say they do not want to be a single parent or are having problems with their husband or partner.
- ◆ About 13,000 women have abortions each year following rape or incest. (This is less than one percent of all abortions.)

## It's the Law<sup>9</sup>

- In the 1973 *Roe v. Wade* decision, the Supreme Court ruled that women, in consultation with their physician, have a constitutionally protected right to have an abortion in the early stages of pregnancy—that is, before viability—free from government interference.
- In 1992, the Court upheld the right to abortion in *Planned Parenthood v. Casey*. However, the ruling significantly weakened the legal protections previously afforded women and physicians by giving states the right to enact restrictions that do not create an “undue burden” for women seeking abortion.
- In *Steinberg v. Carhart* in 2000, the Court declared Nebraska’s law criminalizing so-called partial birth abortion unconstitutional because it lacked an exception to protect the woman’s health. The court also found that the law imposed an undue burden on women because it was written so broadly as to ban not only dilation and extraction (D & X) procedures, but also dilation and evacuation (D & E) procedures.
- In 2000, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration approved the abortion drug mifepristone to be marketed in the United States as an alternative to surgical abortion.
- In 2002, President Bush signed into law legislation ensuring that every infant born alive is considered a person under federal law, a measure designed to prevent mistreatment of infants who survive abortions or are too underdeveloped to live long-term.
- The Child Custody Protection Act (H.R. 476) passed the House April 17, 2002 by a vote of 260-161. Would “prohibit taking minors across State lines in circumvention of laws requiring the involvement of parents in abortion decisions.”
- The Partial-Birth Abortion Ban Act of 2002 (H.R. 4965) was passed on July 24 by the House of Representatives, 274-151. This bill clearly distinguishes Partial-Birth Abortion from other abortion procedures, while protecting women from being subjected to a dangerous unproven experimental procedure.



# 3. What You Can Do

## I. Expose Abortion Fallacies

### Abortion Fallacy #1: Abortion is Painless

The majority of women report moderate to severe pain during an abortion, according to a Planned Parenthood study from 1997.<sup>10</sup>

No pain	1.8%
Hardly any	4.8%
A little	11.1%
Medium	20.8%
Quite a bit	34.2%
Severe	27.4%



### Abortion Fallacy #2: Abortion is Safer than Childbirth

Complications that can arise:

- Perforated Uterus<sup>11</sup>
- Pelvic Inflammatory Disease<sup>12</sup>
- Future miscarriages<sup>13</sup>
- Placenta previa: condition where the placenta implants in the lower part of the uterus and obstructs the cervical opening to the vagina, or birth canal.<sup>14</sup>
- Breast cancer risk increase: twice the risk of breast cancer.<sup>15</sup>

- Ectopic pregnancy increase: 50 percent increased risk for tubal pregnancies.<sup>16</sup>
- Death: Finnish study showed that risk of dying from suicide, risky behavior, homicide and natural causes is several times higher the year after an abortion.<sup>17</sup>

Abortion complications are underreported. There is no requirement to report complications and most women do not return to their abortion clinic for the complications they have.

### Abortion Fallacy #3: Every Child is a Wanted Child

Proponents implied that legalization of abortion in America would reduce child abuse, illegitimate births and unplanned pregnancies. Instead:

- ◆ Child abuse quadrupled between 1977 and 1993.<sup>18</sup>
- ◆ Illegitimacy tripled between 1970 and 1993.<sup>19</sup>
- ◆ The number of abortions doubled between 1972 and 1993.<sup>20</sup>
- ◆ 43 percent of women will have an abortion by the time they are 45 years old.<sup>21</sup>



### Abortion Fallacy #4: There is no Post-Abortion Syndrome

In a study published in the *Archives of General Psychiatry* (8/2000), pro-choice advocates minimized the negatives in the study.

- ◆ 1.4 percent of women reported symptoms within two years of their abortion. 1.4 percent may seem like a small number, but it equals 560,000 women since 1972.
- ◆ 20 percent reported clinical depression. Depression correlated with those who had depression before their abortion, but abortion increased the severity and the number of women with this problem.
- ◆ 31 percent would not do it again. When asked if they would do it all over again, the response was that they would not or were ambivalent, which is a good predictor of post-abortion syndrome.
- ◆ Women paid to participate in this study: 15 percent wouldn't participate and 50 percent wouldn't allow follow-up interview. Studies show that women with post-abortion syndrome are the least likely to participate in research. Their comments were most often, "I do not want to talk about it. I just want to forget." Paying participants distorted this study's validity; also, the high rate of refusal and dropout is very problematic.
- ◆ During the one-year follow up interview:
  - 60 percent had "experienced emotional distress" after their abortions.
  - 16 percent said it was severe distress.
  - 70 percent said they would never consider abortion again if they faced an unwanted pregnancy.
  - Negative feelings increased with time.
  - 17 percent experienced physical problems such as bleeding and pelvic infections due to the abortion. That is a much higher rate than abortion providers admit.



"As abortifacient procedures go, RU-486 is not at all easy to use. In fact it is much more complex to use than the technique of vacuum extraction. True, no anesthetic is required. But a woman who wants to end her pregnancy has to live with her abortion for at least a week using this technique. It's an appalling psychological ordeal."

-Edouard Sakiz, former chairman and CEO of RU-486 manufacturer Roussel Uclaf, in French newspaper *Le Monde*

## II. Know What the Bible Says

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### 1. Children are a blessing from God:

- “Behold, children are a gift of the LORD; The fruit of the womb is a reward.” --Psalm 127:3

### 2. Each of us has been created by and known by God—even before our earthly parents knew us:

- “Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, and before you were born I consecrated you; I have appointed you a prophet to the nations.” --Jeremiah 1:5
- “In his hand is the life of every creature and the breath of all mankind.” --Job 12:10
- “And he is not served by human hands, as if he needed anything, because he himself gives all men life and breath and everything else. ‘For in him we live and move and have our being.’ As some of your own poets have said, ‘We are his offspring.’” --Acts 17:25



### 3. God alone has authority over life and death, and He condemns those who warrant such power as their own:

- “See now that I myself am He! There is no god besides me. I put to death and I bring to life, I have wounded and I will heal, and no one can deliver out of my hand.” --Deuteronomy 32:39

### 4. The Old Testament states that there is punishment for someone who causes a miscarriage intentionally:

- “If men who are fighting hit a pregnant woman and she gives birth prematurely but there is no serious injury, the offender must be fined whatever the woman’s husband demands and the court allows. But if there is serious injury, you are to take life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot, burn for burn, wound for wound, bruise for bruise.” --Exodus 21:22-25

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## III. Answer the Arguments

### 1. “Abortion is the answer to overpopulation.”

- In 1957 there were 3.7 children born per woman. It takes 2.1 children per woman to maintain population. Between 1973 and 1988, the average dropped to 1.8 children per woman. Increases in population in the U.S. have been due to immigration.<sup>22</sup>
- There were 6.5 million fewer school children in 1980 than in 1973, resulting in the closure of 9,000 elementary schools.<sup>23</sup>

### 2. “Abortion will reduce child abuse.”

- “Recent evidence indicates many women harbour strong guilt feelings long after their abortions. Guilt is one important cause of child battering and infanticide. Abortion lowers women’s self-esteem and there are studies reporting a major loss of self-esteem in battering parents....”<sup>24</sup>
- The first ten years after abortion, child abuse increased 500 percent.<sup>25</sup>



3. "If abortion is legal, it will be safer."

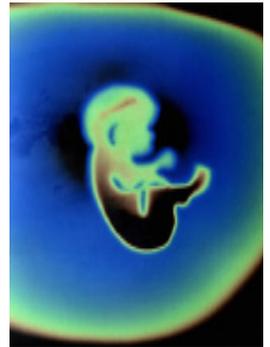
- 90 percent of abortions occurred in doctor's offices before it was legalized.<sup>26</sup>
- Women still die of legal abortions and before it was legal, fewer than 400 women died a year.<sup>27</sup>

4. "If I don't have an abortion, the doctors say my baby will be deformed or disabled."

- Doctors' diagnoses can be wrong and the deformity is often minor (for example, a hair lip) and correctable. Even when it is not, it does not justify killing the child before birth when it is illegal to discriminate against the disabled after they are born.
- Many abortions are for handicaps that are not life threatening - Down's Syndrome. These children are happy and delightful to be around.
- It is much better to bear the child with a fatal illness and let him or her die than to kill the child.<sup>28</sup>

5. "Abortion is okay in cases of rape and incest."

- There are less than 16,000 cases of abortion from rape or incest per year. This is less than one percent of all abortions.<sup>29</sup>
- Less than 3 percent chance of getting pregnant after one unprotected intercourse. Most of these cases are incest.
- Does the child deserve to die because of what the father did? "Fathers shall not be put to death for their children, nor children put to death for their fathers;" Deuteronomy 24:16
- Adoption is the proper option. We shouldn't put the punishment for rape on the woman (she is spoiled goods) or the child. Ethel Waters was the product of a rape.
- Adding the trauma and guilt of abortion to the rape is not the solution.
- Therapy can be given to avoid pregnancy after a rape.



6. "If I don't have an abortion, my life will be in danger."

- Extremely rare – in only one out of 10,000 pregnancies or less is the mother's life in danger.
- In those situations, it is moral to save one life rather than lose two. Sometimes this is the baby and sometimes the mother.
- Even before *Roe v. Wade*, abortion to save the life of the mother was legal.

7. "It is unfair to minorities to restrict abortion."

- Abortion's greatest support is among white women, though there is a higher abortion rate among minorities who favor it less.<sup>30</sup>
- No one has a greater right to kill children.

8. "Every child should be a wanted child."

- Many children not wanted early in a pregnancy are wanted later.
- There is always someone who wants a child. More than two million couples are infertile in the U.S.
- A child's worth is not based on whether he or she is wanted before birth or after birth.



9. "You can't legislate morality."

- Much of legislation is about morality - not stealing, killing, bearing false witness, etc.
- Just because legislation doesn't stop all bad behavior doesn't mean it doesn't deter it.

## 10. "It's okay because it is legal."

- Slavery was once legal, but it wasn't right even though the Supreme Court endorsed it in the Dred Scott decision in the 1840s.

## 11. "Abortion is a decision between a woman and her doctor."

- There is no constitutional right to complete privacy. This new right was established in *Roe v. Wade* though it is never mentioned in the Constitution.
- Privacy is important but it is not an absolute right. It can be overridden by more important things. A father does not have the right to privacy when he beats his wife or has incest with his female daughters. The so-called right to privacy does not give a woman the right to kill her child.
- Having a doctor involved in the abortion decision does not give it legitimacy. Fewer than 2,500 doctors do most of the abortions in the U.S. and they are ostracized by their medical colleagues. Doctors perform abortions because they can make lots of money doing it. Their average fee is \$100 per abortion so they can make over \$3,000 a day.

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## IV. Help Women Who Have Aborted



- If you are pregnant, choose life. You can trust God to care for the precious life He is developing within you.
- Make a commitment to stand against abortion. Ask God to work in the hearts of those who are making the choice.
- Study the Scriptures and other educational tools to help you prepare to give an answer.
- Donate time. Consider volunteering at Crisis Pregnancy Centers. You can

donate a lifetime of love by adopting a child.

- Above all, pray that God will end this tragedy—and restore to each of us and to our nation a commitment to the sanctity of human life.
- Learn from the past. One of the mistakes of the pro-life movement in the early days of abortion was to demand a complete ban or nothing. It is clear now that a complete ban is unrealistic at this time. We should incrementally try to limit the number of abortions done through: a) Trying to eliminate second and third trimester abortions; b) Making abortion more expensive by requiring generally accepted health standards in abortion clinics; and c) Working to recognize the unborn as persons before the law.
- Know the alternatives. Crisis pregnancy centers provide more than counseling. They provide emotional support and practical assistance to women who want to keep their children.
- Love abortion victims and providers. They should know we are Christians by our love. We need to accept those who have aborted into our churches and our hearts, giving them permission to share their pain. We also need to love abortion providers because they are loved by God.

**The remedy for guilt is forgiveness.** We must enter into a personal relationship with Christ who can forgive our wrongdoing and pay for the price for it.

**We have all sinned.** Romans 3:23: "All have sinned and come short of the glory of God." Isaiah 59:2: "But your iniquities have separated you from your God; your sins have hidden his face from you, so that he will not hear."

**The penalty for unforgiven sin is death.** Proverbs 14:12: "There is a way that seems right to a man, but in the end it leads to death." Romans 6:23: "For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord."

**Jesus Christ paid the penalty for our sin.** John 3:16: "For God so loved the world that he gave his only son that whosoever believeth in him, should not perish but have everlasting life."

**God forgives every sin if we repent.** 1 John 1:9: "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness." Romans 8:1 - "Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus."

**Our duty is to accept God's forgiveness.** Luke 7:47-50 (Story of woman caught in adultery): "Therefore, I tell you, her many sins have been forgiven—for she loved much. But he who has been forgiven little loves little. Then Jesus said to her, 'Your sins are forgiven.' The other guests began to say among themselves, 'Who is this who even forgives sins?' Jesus said to the woman, 'Your faith has saved you; go in peace.'"

**Forgiveness must be followed by doing the right thing.** Matthew 6:14-15 - "For if you forgive men when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive men their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins."

## 4. Resources

For more detailed information on abortion, including legislation, congressional testimony and commentaries, please visit [www.cmda.org/washington](http://www.cmda.org/washington).

### Pro-Life Organizations

**The Center for Bioethics & Human Dignity**  
2065 Half Day Road  
Bannockburn, IL 60015  
847-317-8180  
[info@cbhd.org](mailto:info@cbhd.org)

**Christian Legal Society**  
4208 Evergreen Lane,  
Suite 222  
Annandale, VA 22003  
703-642-1070  
[www.clsnet.org](http://www.clsnet.org)

**Life Issues Institute**  
1821 W. Galbraith Road  
Cincinnati, OH 45239  
513-729-3600  
513-729-3636  
[www.lifeissues.org](http://www.lifeissues.org)

**Family Research Council**  
801 G. Street NW  
Washington, DC 20001  
202-393-2100  
800-225-4008  
[www.frc.org](http://www.frc.org)

**Focus on the Family**  
8605 Explorer Drive  
Colorado Springs, CO 80902  
719-531-3328  
800-A-FAMILY  
[www.family.org](http://www.family.org)

**Concerned Women for America**  
1015 Fifteenth St. NW  
Suite 1100  
Washington, DC 20005  
202-488-7000  
[www.cwfa.org](http://www.cwfa.org)

### Helpful Links

[www.babycenter.com](http://www.babycenter.com)  
[www.bethany.org](http://www.bethany.org)

[www.hopeafterabortion.com](http://www.hopeafterabortion.com)  
[www.optionline.org](http://www.optionline.org)

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