

Referring Physician Script

As your physician, the State of Tennessee requires me to give you some specific information before the day of your procedure.

According to the date of your last menstrual period and/or a physical examination and appropriate tests, you will be _____ weeks pregnant at the time of your scheduled abortion, if your abortion is performed 48 hours from now. If your abortion is performed one day later than 48 hours from now, the gestational age will increase by one day, and so on.

While this does not pertain to you, the State requires me to inform you that if 24 or more weeks have elapsed from the first day of a woman's last menstrual period or 22 or more weeks have elapsed from the time of conception, a woman's unborn child may be capable of sustained survival outside the womb, with or without medical assistance.

Again, while this does not pertain to you, I am also required to tell you that if a viable child is prematurely born alive in the course of an abortion, a physician must take steps to preserve the health and life of the child.

I must also tell you that numerous public and private agencies and services are available to assist women during a pregnancy and after birth of a child whether she keeps the child or places it for adoption. If you wish, I or your physician at Knoxville Center for Reproductive Health will provide you with a list of agencies for prenatal care and adoption.

An abortion is an incredibly safe procedure. However, there are risks you need to know about. The risks are minimal, but they include infection, hemorrhage, cervical tear, uterine injury, incomplete procedure and death in very rare cases.

The specific risks of continuing your pregnancy may include anemia, urinary tract infection, depression, hypertension, gestational diabetes, obesity and weight gain, infections, nausea and vomiting. Other less common, but severe problems may affect women during pregnancy, including death in very rare cases. [Please advise of any other specific pregnancy risks unique to the patient.]

Depending on how long you have been pregnant, you can choose between a surgical abortion and a medication abortion. Surgical abortion involves emptying the uterus with machine-operated suction called vacuum aspiration. Medication abortion is a two step process. You will be given medication by a physician on your next visit. Six to forty-eight hours later, you will use a second medication at home. Aftercare information will be provided by nursing staff and will include instructions about medications, bleeding, cramping, pain management, hormonal changes, birth control, infection prevention, emergency contact, follow-up care and when you may return to your normal activities.

What questions do you have for me at this point? Feel free to ask questions at any time during your care.