

Appendix E: Discharge information sheet

How to Take Care of Yourself

- Resume normal activities only when you feel comfortable doing so.
- Eat according to your normal customs and diet.
- Showering, tub bathing and swimming are permitted.
- Correctly and completely take the medications that you have been given:

_____ is for pain and discomfort.

Take ___ pill(s) every ___ hour(s), as needed.

Other medications: _____

- Call the clinic (telephone number: _____) or come in before then if you have concerns.
- If you have received a contraceptive method, start using it *right away*. It is possible to become pregnant almost immediately after an abortion. If you did not receive a contraceptive method but would like to use one, see your provider as soon as possible. In the meantime, abstain from sexual intercourse or use condoms to prevent pregnancy.

What to Avoid

- Do not have sex until your contraceptive method has had a chance to take effect, if you wish to avoid becoming pregnant. Avoid using a vaginal sponge, diaphragm or cervical cap until all bleeding has stopped.
- Do not douche for one week after the procedure. Routine douching is not recommended unless prescribed by your clinician.

What Is Normal

- Bleeding and cramping similar to a normal period for up to one week; spotting may occur for up to several weeks.
- Mild fatigue for a few days.
- There is no “normal” emotional reaction to an abortion procedure. Some women feel a sense of relief, while other women feel sad. If you experience strong emotions, it may help to talk with a trusted friend, relative or provider about these feelings.

Seek care immediately if you experience any of these abnormal symptoms.

What is abnormal

- | | |
|--|-------------------------------------|
| • Fever | • Abdominal pain |
| • Nausea, vomiting | • Vaginal discharge that smells bad |
| • Dizziness, lightheadedness or fainting | • Severe cramping |
| • Bleeding that is much heavier than a normal period | |

(Adapted from EngenderHealth, 2002b and Policar et al., 1999)