

Aradia offers:

- ✓ Birth Control including Emergency Contraception (*Morning-After Pill*)
- ✓ Annual Exams and Pap Smears
- ✓ STI/STD Testing and Counseling
- ✓ HIV Rapid Result Testing (same-day results)
- ✓ Spanish-Speaking Staff and Health Information
- ✓ Saturday Appointments
- ✓ Same-Day Appointments (please call for availability)
- ✓ **NEW Monday walk-in clinic! Call for details.**

To make an appointment please call us Monday through Saturday at (206) 323-9388 or toll free at (800) 644-9389.



Aftercare Resources

- Backline, www.yourbackline.org, 1-888-493-0092. A pregnancy options discussion and information hotline. Backline is dedicated to addressing the broad range of experiences and emotions surrounding pregnancy, parenting, adoption and abortion.
- Exhale, www.4exhale.org, 1-866-4-EXHALE. Exhale, a phone hotline, supports women who have abortions, and their partners, friends and family. They respect the cultural, social and religious beliefs of all callers.
- *I had an Abortion: Real Stories. Real Choices. Vol 1.* Published by Aradia. Ask your health advocate for a copy or visit our website at www.aradia.org.
- I'mNotSorry.net, www.imnotsorry.net. I'mNotSorry.net is a site where women can share their positive experiences with abortion and celebrate the right to choose.

Additional Resources

- Abortion Access Project, www.abortionaccess.org
- ChoiceLinkUp.com
- Washington NARAL, www.wanaral.org



**Aftercare:
How to Care for
Yourself After
an Abortion**



1300 Spring Street, Suite 500

Seattle, WA 98104

(206) 323-9388/ (800) 644-9389

www.aradia.org

www.clinicafeminista.org

EMERGENCY

If you have a medical emergency when the clinic is closed (afterhours or Sundays) call **(206) 726-2632**. Please leave your name and telephone number only and an Aradia health-worker who has **24-hour** access to a physician will call you back. If your call is not returned within 15 to 30 minutes please call back and leave another message.

What You May Experience

Bleeding may vary from a few days of spotting to a few weeks of moderate flow. Some women do not bleed at all. Also, it is not unusual to stop bleeding and then begin again. Often, 48-72 hours after the abortion, there is a hormonal shift that may “suddenly” cause cramping, bleeding and clots. This can be normal.

Cramping may feel similar to menstrual cramps, and may stop and start depending on your activity level. You can take up to 800mg of Ibuprofen (Motrin, Advil, Nuprin) every 6-8 hours. This dosage should be decreased as soon as the cramping decreases. Do **NOT** take aspirin. You can perform uterine massage to help your uterus contract and to slow any bleeding. To do this, push down as hard as you can above your pubic bone while sitting on the toilet. You may notice that you pass clots as you are doing this. That is normal. Keep in mind that the water will make the clots appear larger. You may wish to use a heating pad or hot water bottle on your abdomen to relieve discomfort. Lying down and elevating your feet can also help relieve cramping.

Small blood clots are normal to pass and are not a problem unless you also have a fever above 100.5° F or severe cramping.

Emotions may be strong from the hormonal changes and are considered normal. It may help to talk with a close friend or family member. Please refer to the back of this brochure for a list of supportive resources.

Pregnancy symptoms such as nausea usually decrease in two days. Other symptoms should be gone in 1-2 weeks.

Breast tenderness is normal for up to two weeks following an abortion. It is very important that you do not stimulate your breasts at all. Do not sleep on your stomach, let water hit them in the shower, squeeze the nipples, etc. You may apply ice to decrease the swelling: 20 minutes on, then 20 minutes off.

Menstrual period: your next period will start anywhere from 4-8 weeks from the date of your abortion, and it may be different than usual (heavier, lighter, longer, shorter, etc.).

Please call the clinic if you have...

- Heavy, persistent bleeding — soaking through a pad an hour for three hours in a row.
- Unusually severe cramping, where you are doubled over in pain.
- Passing large blood clots (walnut or golf-ball in size).
- Bad smelling vaginal discharge.
- Fever of 100.5° F or more.
- Continued pregnancy symptoms after two weeks.

Call **206.323.9388** or **206.726.2632** (afterhours or Sundays)

Do...

- Use pads and change them often to keep harmful bacteria from growing on the pad.
- Rest often, especially during the first 48 hours, to give your body time to begin healing.
- Finish taking the full course of prescribed antibiotics.
- Monitor your temperature and bleeding. Take your temperature twice a day for one full week following the abortion.
- Call the clinic if any unusual symptoms develop or if you have any questions.
- Return to the clinic if you are experiencing any problems. A follow-up appointment is included in your fee.

Do not...

- Put anything in your vagina for three weeks after your abortion. It is very important to keep bacteria out of the vagina and uterus in order to avoid infection. This includes tampons, vaginal intercourse, douching, baths, swimming and hot-tubbing. You may take showers or stand in the tub to wash down.
- Engage in any strenuous exercise or heavy lifting for two weeks. Strenuous activities (including being on your feet a lot or walking long distances) may cause heavier bleeding and cramping.
- Take aspirin, drink alcohol or smoke marijuana for three weeks. These blood thinners and muscle relaxants may cause heavier bleeding.

Birth Control

It is easily possible to become pregnant immediately following an abortion and before your next period. Plan to have a contraceptive method to use. Remember, you should not have vaginal intercourse for three weeks after the abortion in order to prevent infection.

If you plan to use birth control pills for contraception you should begin taking them the first Sunday after the abortion, whether or not you are still bleeding. Remember that they will not protect you from pregnancy during the **entire** first cycle, and they do not protect against sexually transmitted infections like chlamydia and HIV.

Aradia provides birth control. You may be eligible for **FREE** birth control. Ask your health advocate about your options and schedule an appointment today.

Things to Know While Taking Doxycycline (Antibiotics)

- Do not take iron supplements (some multivitamins), antacids or sodium bicarbonate (baking soda) within 1-2 hours of the time you take the doxycycline. They interfere with the medication and make it less effective.
- Do not take doxycycline with milk or other dairy products. Dairy products in your stomach when you take the medication decreases your body's ability to absorb the antibiotic.
- If you have surgery (including dental surgery) with a general anesthetic, tell your provider that you are taking doxycycline.
- **Please call the clinic for the following side effects: itching, hives, skin rash, trouble breathing and wheezing.**
- Other side effects may occur that do not require medical attention such as burning of the stomach, cramps, diarrhea, increased sensitivity to sun (avoid the sun if you burn easily), nausea or vomiting, and sore tongue or mouth. However, if they continue or you are worried about them, please call the clinic.
- Doxycycline may cause the tongue to become darkened or discolored. These changes are usually temporary and go away when you stop taking the medicine. Many of the gastro-intestinal symptoms may be related to an overgrowth of yeast organisms in the intestines or vagina resulting from the action of the antibiotic. Eat yogurt daily for 10 days after completing the antibiotic. If symptoms persist, consult the clinic as you may need to take vaginal or oral medicine to suppress yeast growth.

After Abortion Feelings

Feelings following an abortion vary from person to person and will probably depend on your particular circumstances. The decision to end a pregnancy can be difficult for some women. Others feel quite able to put the experience behind them. Most women say they feel relieved once the abortion is over.

There is no medical evidence to suggest that abortion is responsible for deep or long lasting trauma. A lot of research has been carried out on the psychological effects of abortion and has found that most women feel sad at the time but have no long-term depression or anxiety after abortion. If you need support afterwards, please call us about arranging post-abortion counseling. Also, please refer to the resources listed on the back of this brochure.

Did you know that one out of every three women in this country will have had an abortion by the time she is 45 years old?