

Abortion Myth Busters

✓ **Abortion does not result in future infertility.**

Fertility returns immediately after abortion.

If a woman does not want to be pregnant again immediately, she will be offered a choice of contraception after the abortion.

✓ **Abortion does not increase the risk of miscarriage, ectopic pregnancy or a low placenta in future pregnancies.**

There may be a slightly higher risk of future premature birth. However, NHS Choices, summarising medical research, emphasises that the risk is low.

✓ **Abortion does not increase the risk of developing breast cancer.**

It has been demonstrated many times, by large-scale surveys in several countries, that there is no link between abortions and breast cancer. Two strong studies documented by the American Cancer Society found that induced abortions and miscarriage had no overall effect on the risk of breast cancer.

✓ **Abortion does not cause mental illness.**

Successive studies and research reviews have demonstrated that the experience of abortion makes little or no difference to women's mental health. Research includes an extensive systematic review of research evidence, conducted by the Academy of Royal Medical Colleges and referenced by NHS Choices.

✓ **Current evidence suggests that the foetus is unable to feel pain under 24 weeks.**

In reviewing the neuroanatomical and physiological evidence in the foetus, the RCOG concluded that it was apparent that connections from the periphery to the cortex are not intact before 24 weeks of gestation and, as most neuroscientists believe that the cortex is necessary for pain perception, it can be concluded that the foetus cannot experience pain in any sense prior to this gestation.

✓ **Emergency contraception, taken after unprotected sex, is not a method of abortion.**

Pregnancy only starts when a fertilised egg implants in the wall of the womb. Emergency contraception is only used before implantation.

The emergency contraceptive pill and the emergency copper intra-uterine device (IUD) are both emergency contraception methods.