

Medication Abortion Reversal

Claims of medication abortion reversal are not supported by the body of scientific evidence, and this approach is not recommended in ACOG's clinical guidance on medication abortion. There are no ACOG guidelines that support this course of action.

Facts are important.

- Mifepristone, previously known as RU486, is part of a combination of drugs used for medication abortion.
- Mifepristone is the first drug in the combination and is not known to cause birth defects.
- Misoprostol is the second drug in the combination, and the evidence-based regimen for medication abortion includes mifepristone taken first and then misoprostol taken at a later point to complete the abortion.
- Because medication abortion requires this combination of medications, many women will not abort just from using the first medication. In 30-50% of women who take mifepristone alone, the pregnancy will continue.

Reliable evidence is not available.

- A 2012 case series describes six women who took mifepristone and then had a series of progesterone injections. This paper describes a handful of experiences, these women received varying regimens of injected progesterone, and this was not a controlled study. Therefore it does not provide evidence that progesterone was responsible for the reported outcomes. In addition, there was no oversight of an institutional review board or an ethical review committee for this intervention.
- Taking mifepristone (without misoprostol) will not always cause abortion by itself, so no intervention may lead to the same result as this case series.
- There are no reliable research studies to prove that any treatment reverses the effects of mifepristone.

What the evidence suggests:

- Available research seems to indicate that in the rare situation where a woman takes mifepristone and then changes her mind, doing nothing and waiting to see what happens is just as effective as intervening with a course of progesterone.
- Progesterone, while generally well tolerated, can cause significant cardiovascular, nervous system and endocrine adverse reactions as well as other side effects.