VIEWING ULTRASOUNDS BEFORE FIRST AND SECOND TRIMESTER ABORTIONS: WOMEN'S CHOICES AND PERCEPTIONS

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Why do this study?

- Anti-choice organizations use second trimester images in their campaigns
- Some states require viewing ultrasounds
- Some staff said that they are uncomfortable showing second trimester images
- All evidence to date is from first trimester abortions and/or abnormal pregnancies


9 mm


0
2
4
6
8
20G
77
DR
80

First Trimester: How many women want to see the ultrasound?

	Want to see	Positive response	Study
Canada	72%	84%	Wiebe;2009: 350 <14 wks
France	12%	n/a	Venditteli; 2004: 502, <14 wks
South Africa	64%	74%	Bamigboye;2002 : 500, <14 wks
UK	34%	n/a	Graham; 2010: 191, <15 wks

Vancouver 2008

Wiebe ER, Adams L. Women's perceptions about seeing the ultrasound picture before an abortion. Euro J Contracept Reprod Health Care 2009;14(2):97-102. n=350

	Wants to see US	Does not want to see US	p- value
Age (years)	26.8	30.0	<.001
Any previous births	83 (32.7%)	55 (57.3%)	<.001

Victoria 2012

Method

- Women presenting for first and second trimester abortion
- Offered choice of viewing ultrasound
- Questionnaires before and after viewing
- Oversampling of second trimester

RESULTS

Results

- 275 women completed the first questionnaires
- 176 1st trimester, 99 2nd trimester
- 131 (47.6%) said they wanted to view US
- 120 completed second questionnaires

Are 1st and 2nd trimester women different? n= 275

	1st tri n=176	2nd tri n=99	p-value
Age: <20 years	15%	29%	<.007
20-29 years	52%	52%	
30+ years	32%	19%	
Gestational age in weeks	7.2	15.5	<.001
Parity: any births	33%	57%	<.001
Ethnicity: White/Caucasian	52%	52%	.96

Who wants to see ultrasounds?

n= 275

	Yes (131)	No (144)	p value
Age: <19 years	73%	27%	<.001
20+ years	43%	57%	
1st trimester	51%	49%	.19
2nd trimester	42%	58%	
Ethnicity: White/Caucasian	52%	48%	.247
Parity: Any births	42%	59%	.079

What do they expect to see? n=239

	1st tri (150)	2nd tri (89)	p-value
Not much	45.9%	11.6%	<.001
Don't know	**33.1%**	**48.8%**	**.047**
A baby	20.9%	49.5%	<.001

Did it make it harder emotionally? n=120

	Yes (34) 28%	No (86) 72%	p-value
Age (years)	24	25	.43
Ethnicity: White/Caucasian	25%	75%	.064
1st trimester (n=80) 2nd trimester (n=40)	21% 43%	79% 58%	.015
Parity: any births	28%	72%	.99

Women's Comments

27 general comments:

- 6 neutral
- 21 positive

Women's comments

- 27 y o, 12 week twins
- Expected: "I think I will see the babies"
- After: "It didn't change anything"

Women's comments

- 21 y 0, 14 weeks
- expected "not much"
- found it harder emotionally
- "But, I am glad I saw it"

Women's comments

- 17 y 0, 12 weeks
- Did not make it harder
- "surprised to see small fetus, thought it would only be egg"

Women's comments

- 31 y 0, 17 weeks
- Expected: "Little human"
- Did not make it harder
- After: "I love my tummy and womb. It is surrounded by dolphins and angels. It's okay to send this soul back to the source with love."

Women's comments

- 23 y 0, 11 weeks
- Expected: "Vague shape starting to take form"
- found it harder emotionally
- "Further along… more defined shape"

Women's comments

- 30 y 0, 5 weeks
- "Seeing the ultrasound was helpful. I felt like I was more connected to this intervention. It made the situation more real, ie. 'being pregnant' and helped solidify my decision that I am not ready to have what was growing inside me continue to grow".

Women's comments

- 18 y 0, 19 weeks
- Expected "my baby"
- Found it harder
- "Keep doing what you do. You guys are amazingly helpful"

Discussion

- Most women do NOT get more upset
- Most of the comments from the women who said it made it harder were positive
- Often women who do get more upset value the experience; they say it feels real, it helps them grieve, they thank us for the choice to view the ultrasound

Discussion

- Only one woman (12 w) changed her mind (not 90% quoted by anti-choice)
- Most abortions are in the first trimester and there is not much to see

Conclusions

- Women want the CHOICE to view the ultrasound
- SUPP ORT is important because some women find it harder emotionally