



# Women's experiences of home abortion - a radical change in empowerment

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*F.I.A.P.A.C, SEVILLE, 23 OCTOBER 2010*

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## Study aim

*To gain knowledge about women's experiences, views and reactions regarding having a home abortion (medical abortion with the use of misoprostol at home)*

## Subjects and method

*100 women who had chosen home abortion*

*Experiences of previous pregnancies (90/100)*

*Interview one week post-abortion*

*A semi-structured interview guide - quantitative and qualitative data*

## Social background

n=100

<i>Median /mean (years)</i>	<i>32/33</i>
<i>Married/cohabiting</i>	<i>73</i>
<i>Partner relationship/not cohabiting</i>	<i>22</i>
<i>Single</i>	<i>5</i>
<i>Children</i>	<i>80</i>
<i>Employed</i>	<i>78</i>
<i>On parental leave/student</i>	<i>15/11</i>
<i>Unemployed/others</i>	<i>10</i>

## Taking the pill at clinic (day 1) - a crucial moment

- ***Only positive feelings (45/77)*** "...a relief to get started..." ,  
"... a major decision and I felt it was okay when I took the pill..."  
"...an irrevocable act..." , "...an act with no return..."
- ***Mixed feelings (23/77)*** "... both hard and sad but also good to start the process..." ,  
"...this was the hardest part...when you do the deed...it was harder than the day of expulsion..."
- ***Only painful feelings (9/77)*** "...actively kills the embryo...now it is the end, the moment of dying...I was sad..." , "...harder than the day of expulsion..."

## Working and/or waiting for expulsion (day 2)

### *Ordinary daily activities - no special thoughts or feelings*

”... worked as usually...”, “...thought sometimes that I was going to have an abortion...a strange feeling but not scary...”

### *An interminable wait for expulsion to occur*

“...counted the minutes until the whole thing would be over...the mere thought that I was pregnant was hard...”

## Relief - the main feeling during expulsion day

- ***Calm, goal oriented (68/100)*** “... looked upon it as a job that had to be done...”, “felt relief and release...good it was over...”
- ***Mixed feelings (15/100)*** “...one felt sad but the decision felt right...”
- ***Only painful feelings (9/100) - sadness, loneliness, anger and self-blame*** “...had to do it because the circumstances were not good...”
- ***Partner (75/100) or other person (16/100) present***

## The products of conception (POCs)

*Most women had looked at POCs (80/100)*

**“...looked at it to confirm that it had come out...”, “... I am curious and want to know what happens...”**

*Most women had not find it especially dramatic to see or handle the POCs.*

*Eight women (8/20) had not looked at the POCs due to feeling of discomfort or for fear of seeing the embryo*

## Satisfaction and wellbeing - one week post-abortion

*Pleased with the decision and the method (98/100)*

*Suffered no emotional distress related to abortion (93/100)*

*Would recommend the method to other (96/100)*

### *Experiences of having the home abortion:*

*As expected* 48

*Easier than expected* 44

*Harder than expected* 8

**‘Handling it on your own’ – privacy, control and empowerment**

*Privacy, greater autonomy*

*Comfort - own environment, bed and toilet etc.*

*Presence of a supporting partner/friend*

*Natural to opt the home abortion method*

*A relief to be spared from having the abortion at clinic*

*“...staying at clinic would have made me feel more sick...”*,

*“...a more dramatic act than it was at home...”*

## Conclusions

*Given that the women choose this method themselves and are well informed, they are able to handle the abortion process by themselves at home.*

*The option to choose home abortion implies a radical change in empowerment for women.*

*Also allowing women the possibility to take mifepristone at home would increase their personal integrity and control even more.*