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Taking abortion pill at home 'as safe as clinic option' - study



(HTTPS://WWW.HER.IE/AUTHOR/KATIEMYTHEN/67)

BY KATIE MYTHEN-LYNCH (HTTPS://WWW.HER.IE/AUTHOR/KATIEMYTHEN/67)

### A new study of Irish women has revealed that taking a medical abortion pill bought online is as safe as visiting an abortion clinic.

While the pills, available from Women on Web, (WoW), a nonprofit organisation that provides early medical abortion, are illegal in the Republic of Ireland. no women have been prosecuted to date.

A team led by Abigail Aiken at the University of Texas analysed the experiences of 1,000 women from the Republic and Northern Ireland who used the drugs distributed by the organisation, mifepristone and misoprostol, in early pregnancy.

The majority of the group were less than seven weeks pregnant and the rest were up to nine weeks - below the 10 week limit.

The results of the <u>study (http://press.psprings.co.uk/bmj/may/abortionresearch.pdf)</u> showed that 90 percent of women who opted for the abortion pill did not need surgical intervention for complications.

Of the 10 percent who did need to seek medical advice, as per the online support for people who purchase the pill, a small number reported that they needed a blood transfusion and a further 27 women were prescribed antibiotics. There were no deaths.

About a quarter of the world's population lives in countries with highly restrictive abortion laws. Women in these countries often resort to unsafe methods (including sharp objects or noxious substances) to end their pregnancies.

Globally, each year an estimated 43000 women die as a result of lack of access to safe legal abortion services through their countries' formal healthcare systems. Millions more have complications.

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In fact, worldwide, the fourth leading cause of maternal mortality is unsafe abortion.

The research team concluded that self sourced medical abortion using online telemedicine 'can be highly effective, and outcomes compare favourably with in clinic protocols. Reported rates of adverse events are low.'

'Women are able to self identify the symptoms of potentially serious complications, and most report seeking medical attention when advised. Results have important implications for women worldwide living in areas where access to abortion is restricted.' they reported.

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A bus is driving around Ireland for the next two days giving women advice on safe abortion

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