

What are the short-term and long-term risks and adverse effects of a D&E abortion?

For the woman, this procedure carries a [significant immediate risk of major complications](#). Since the baby is removed in pieces, sharp pieces of broken fetal bones can puncture the woman's uterus or cause a large tear (laceration). This perforation or laceration of the uterus or cervix, can also possibly damage the bowel, bladder, the rectum and other maternal organs.

In addition to perforation and damage to internal organs, a second trimester abortion has a greatly increased risk of excessive bleeding and hemorrhaging. This is because the placenta is tightly adherent to the lining of the womb at this stage in pregnancy, and removing it often requires considerable scraping. The risk of excessive bleeding as a result of the abortion increases as the baby develops. The woman may also experience extreme blood loss if her uterus or cervix is injured, if the uterus does not contract properly after the procedure, or if she has an incomplete abortion. She also runs a higher risk of cervical damage, uterine perforation and scarred tissue, which may result in future pregnancy complications, such as miscarriage and preterm birth.¹ Uterine rupture can even lead to maternal death.

Long-term damage from second trimester abortion is more frequent than for abortions in the first trimester. Because the cervix has to be so widely dilated to extract the larger child, the risk of cervical damage is much greater, increasing the risk that a woman will be unable to carry a future pregnancy to term. The CDC also estimates that the risk of death increases by 38% for each additional week of gestation.²

There are studies that indicate the risk of depression, anxiety, and suicide is greater for a woman who aborts an unwanted pregnancy than it is for a woman who carries an unwanted pregnancy to term.³

Risks for the Mother

Cervical laceration: 1 in 111 women
Uterine Perforation: 1 in 250 women⁴
Infection: 1 in 25 women⁵
Excessive bleeding: 1 in 71 women⁶
Maternal death ⁷

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3. Fergusson, David M with Joseph M. Boden and L. John Harwood. "Does abortion reduce the mental health risks of unwanted or unintended pregnancy? A re-appraisal of the evidence." *Australian & New Zealand Journal of Psychiatry*, Sept. 2013, Vol. 47, No. 9, pp. 819-827. <<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/23553240>>.
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7. "Risk Factors for Legal Induced Abortion-Related Mortality in the United States." American College of Obstetrics and Gynecology, Vol 103, No. 4, April 2004.

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