

Patient information: Cytotec tablet treatment for miscarriage or missed abortion

Kvinneklivnikken (KVI)/Gynekologisk avd.

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1. Name of treatment

Information for patients receiving Cytotec tablets to treat an incomplete miscarriage or pregnancy loss without bleeding (missed abortion).

2. Brief description of the treatment

Cytotec tablets cause the uterus to contract and expel the pregnancy. This is done at home. If you received Mifergyn tablets at the hospital, you should take the Cytotec tablets 24-72 hours after this.

3. When is the treatment meant for you?

If an ultrasound examination ascertains an incomplete miscarriage or pregnancy loss. Approximately 20 % of all early pregnancies end in a miscarriage for various reasons. The treatment helps the uterus expel the remains of the pregnancy. Taking Cytotec tablets is the most gentle way to do this.

Treatment is successful in most cases (about 85-90%). Curettage may still be necessary for some patients if the treatment fails to remove all the remains. Two Cytotec treatments are commonly tried before curettage is recommended.

4. How can I prepare myself?

Cytotec tablets are taken at home. You are required to have an adult present from the moment you insert the tablets in the vagina until you have aborted. BEFORE you start, we recommend buying a non-prescription pain reliever such as Voltarol 25 mg (1-2 tablets as needed). Voltarol can be taken in combination with Panodil 1 g (Paracetamol) (also non-prescription),

PLEASE NOTE! You can replace Voltarol with Arcoxia 120 mg if you have any contraindications such as asthma, allergies or reflux/ stomach acid issues.

5. How does treatment take place?

The clinic will give you these items to bring home:

- 1 Zofran tablet, 8 mg (antiemetic)
- 4 Cytotec tablets, 0.2 mg
- 1 Panodil tablet, 1 g. (1.5 g if you weigh less than 60 kg)
- 2 Voltaren tablets, 50 mg
- 1 OxyContin tablet, 10 mg
- 1 Oxynorm tablet (5 mg) if the pain persists more than a few hours. (taken as needed)

Treatment:

We recommend that you start treatment in the morning or before noon. If you received Mifergyn tablets at the hospital, you should wait 24 hours before taking the Cytotec tablets, but no later than 72 hours after swallowing the tablet. It may be wise to take an antiemetic tablet (effective against vomiting and nausea, such as Zofran) half an hour before taking the other tablets.

Swallow 1 Zofran tablet (8 mg) to combat nausea and 2 Panodil tablets (1 g), 2 Voltaren tablets (50 mg) and 1 OxyContin tablet (10 mg) to combat expected pain.

Then insert 4 Cytotec tablets deep into the vagina. Do not be alarmed if the tablets eventually fall out. This is normal.

You can take Panodil/Voltarol tablets after 6 hours have passed, if needed (available from pharmacies without a prescription) up to 2-3 times a day.



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6. Are you in pain?

Pain is experienced differently from person to person. Most people experience painful menstrual cramps when the uterus empties, while others do not notice much. It is important to take the pain relief tablets as described above. For most women, the pain is worst a few hours after the tablets are inserted in the vagina until bleeding starts. You can take Panodil/Voltarol tablets, 2-3 times a day, or use the Oxynorm tablet after a few hours.

7. How long does treatment take?

The uterus will begin to contract 1-4 hours after you insert the Cytotec tablets in your vagina. You will experience somewhat more bleeding than your normal menstruation. Most women abort 4-6 hours after treatment has started, but some may have to wait until the next day. For most women, the pain and bleeding will end within the first 24 hours after treatment.

8. What happens afterwards?

Bleeding: It is normal to bleed for 2-3 weeks after the treatment, but the bleeding will eventually decrease. You may experience some spotting until your next menstrual period. Use sanitary pads, not tampons, as long as you are bleeding.

Menstruation: You can expect to get your period back 4-6 weeks after the abortion. The pain may be stronger and last a little longer than you are used to.

Intercourse and bathing/bathtubs: You should avoid this as long as you are bleeding and at least two weeks, due to the risk of infection.

Doctor's certificate: Absence from work/doctor's certificate is usually not necessary. You can be in normal activity shortly after the abortion. Most women choose to be at home the first 24 hours after treatment. If needed, you can get a doctor's certificate for 1-3 days, or you can call in sick for a day or two.

Otherwise, we recommend normal activities and physical exercise. Some women experience headaches or diarrhoea after inserting Cytotec tablets. This is transient and harmless.

9. Side effects and complications

Contact the Maternity Clinic / Gynaecology ward (tel. 23 02 75 50) day or night if you:

- Have not started bleeding 24 hours after inserting the Cytotec tablets in the vagina
- Have to change more than 6 night-time pads in 2 hours
- Experience heavy bleeding with clots, for more than 14 days
- Bleeding that lasts more than 4 weeks
- Pain after 14 days
- Fever higher than 38 °C



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10. Control – follow-up

You should take a pregnancy test at home, 4 weeks after treatment. If this is positive, you should call the nurses desk at the Maternity Clinic /Gyn ward. Tel.: 23 02 75 50.

11. Frequently asked questions

When can I try to get pregnant again?

We recommend waiting until your menstrual period has returned before trying to get pregnant again.

Why not carry out a curettage first?

Mifergyn and Cytotec are the safest and most gentle treatment for most people. Curettage is a surgical procedure that involves general anaesthesia.

Is there anything I could have done to prevent the pregnancy loss?

Miscarriage is nature's way of cleaning up; there is no way of influencing this form of pregnancy loss.



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