



**VADEMECUM
LIBERA
DI SAPERE
LIBERA DI
ABORTIRE**

**EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT
VOLUNTARY TERMINATION OF PREGNANCY IN ITALY**

we want information, prevention and care, not judgements

FIND OUT MORE AT **liberadiabortire.it**

  liberadiabortire

WHAT CAN YOU DO IF YOU DECIDE TO GET AN ABORTION

If you decide **to get an abortion** (sometimes also referred to as **termination of pregnancy**), you'll need accurate and clear information since misinformation may endanger you and your health. This is everything you must know so to have an abortion:

1. How soon and on what grounds can I have an abortion?

Within the first 90 days of pregnancy, you can have an abortion, **whatever the reason** for your choice. The 90 days are calculated from the first day of your last period.

2. What if there are health issues?

If pregnancy is **endangering your life, your health** (mental health included) or fetal malformations have been detected, the termination of pregnancy is allowed even after those 90 days: it is commonly known as therapeutic abortion.

3. What can I do if I'm underage?

If you are a minor, you have to **be authorized by both your parents**, when they have joint parental responsibility, or by the one parent who has exclusive parental responsibility. If, for serious reasons, **you cannot talk to your parents**, you can contact one of the 'consultori' in your area, which will prepare **a report to be submitted to the tutelary judge**, who will then authorise the termination of pregnancy.

If there is a risk to your life or danger to your health due to the condition of the foetus, the doctor may proceed with a therapeutic abortion even without your parents' consent. In this case there's no need to resort to the tutelary judge.

4. If I'm a migrant without a residence permit?

It is possible for migrant women to get an abortion without paying any fees **even if they lack the stay permit**. Regardless of the condition of your stay, you can turn to the nearest 'consultorio', which will initiate the specific procedure and supply information on medical centres authorised to perform terminations of pregnancy.

5. I decided to get an abortion, but I don't know what to do

In order to get an abortion, you may turn to your **family doctor, your gynaecologist or a nearby 'consultorio'**. Whatever figure you may seek help from, remember that **any of them has the duty** to ascertain your pregnancy status, to inform you of your rights and to list possible alternatives.

If, at the end of the screening, you **confirm that you want to have an abortion**, the doctor **must grant you a certificate which you must sign stating that you have had an encounter, and finally give you instructions on the next steps**. The certificate required to terminate the pregnancy can be obtained by telemedicine: if you wish you may contact the association Vita di Donna ONLUS, which can guarantee a valid authenticated signature for your certificate.

6. What if my doctor is a conscientious objector?

If you think that your **family doctor or gynaecologist doesn't want to accompany you in your choice**, you may always turn to a 'Consultorio'. The structure's staff may ask you to provide them with some specific documents. You should prepare them so that you

won't waste time:

- Laboratory-reported pregnancy test of urine or blood test measuring the dosage of Beta HCG (pregnancy hormone).
- Identity card.
- For Italian and foreign citizens registered with the National Health Service: valid health card.
- For foreign nationals not registered with the SSN, belonging to the EU or to countries with which Italy has an agreement: the rules laid down in the reciprocal agreements apply.
- For non-EU citizens who do not have a valid visa or residence permit, and who do not have economic resources: STP (foreigner temporarily present) document.

7. What is the “periodo di riflessione” (cooling-off period)?

According to law 194/1978, once you have obtained from your doctor the certificate required to get a legal abortion, **you must wait 7 days** before you can physically proceed with the termination of pregnancy. It is commonly known as “cooling-off period”, and only **in certified cases of urgency**, the doctor who ascertained your pregnancy status, can provide you with a different certificate stating that you **must proceed immediately with the abortion without having to wait seven days**.

8. The 7 days of compulsory waiting have expired. How do I book my intervention?

Even while you're waiting for the 7 mandatory days to pass, you can seek advice from the hospital's termination of pregnancy unit in order to plan your abortion. You can ask for information concerning the procedure (medical or surgical abortion) as well as the subsequent contraception.

9. What if I need help or some psychological support?

Psychological and social counselling is available at any time during the process. If you are afraid of being judged and do not trust the staff you have referred to, but still feel the need for emotional support, you can turn to the "IVG,HO ABORTITO E STO BENISSIMO" pages.

10. How can I choose between medical abortion or surgical abortion?

There are two ways that an abortion can be done. These are **surgical abortion** or **medical abortion** (RU486). Thanks to the new directives issued by the Ministry of Health in August 2020 - which, however, require specific administrative acts in order to be applied - you can choose to have **a medical abortion in day-hospital, in a “consultorio” or in an ambulatory facility up to the 9th week of pregnancy (i.e. 63 days)**.

WHAT IS NOT LAWFUL TO SUFFER

11. You don't have to prove you're facing a serious risk to have an abortion within the first 90 days.

If you want to terminate your pregnancy within the first 90 days **you don't have to prove** it is endangering your health or that of the foetus. It is not legally allowed to deny a woman a voluntary termination of pregnancy **within the first three months**.

12. It is illegal for ALL doctors in a hospital to be conscientious objectors.

Even if there might be some conscientious objectors in the hospital you've turned to, the structure is still obliged to help you in your choice to end the pregnancy. **Report to Laiga (LIBERA ASSOCIAZIONE ITALIANA GINECOLOGI PER APPLICAZIONE LEGGE 194)** and Obiezione Respinta on the lack of non-objecting personnel in an entire hospital. Conscientious objection is the right of individuals, it cannot be legally exercised by entire structures. In Italy, Regions must control and guarantee the presence of non-objecting medical personnel also through staff mobility. Conscientious objection cannot be invoked when the intervention of medical personnel is crucial to save the woman's life, nor with regard to assistance before and after the intervention.

13. If pregnancy is a threat to your survival, no one can deny you an abortion

If you have to undergo a therapeutic abortion, **NO ONE** is allowed to deny it to you since pregnancy is endangering your life or your health.

14. They can't inform your parents, if you have not agreed to

If you are underage, you've decided to get an abortion and you don't want your parents to know, you can always turn to your family doctor, to a 'consultorio' or a medical facility whose staff will contact the tutelary judge. In any case, **no one is authorised to inform your parents without your authorization**.

15. They can't force you to choose one procedure rather than another

No member of the medical staff can force you to choose for one method rather than another unless there are real and proven medical contraindications and if you are within the time frame for a medical abortion.

16. Beware of timing!!

The cooling-off period is mandatory, therefore it is important to act promptly. However, **no one can exploit this time period so as to prevent you from having an abortion**, especially if you are close to the 90-day deadline.