

Know your health



Pregnancy options

Table of Contents

Working through your options	4
How would I know I am pregnant?	6
What is a pregnancy test?	7
Pregnancy options	8
<i>Continuing the pregnancy and parenting</i>	10
<i>Adoption and fostering</i>	12
<i>Abortion</i>	14
Help to make a decision	20
Contraception	22
Relationship and support networks	24

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Pregnant?

Working through your options

This booklet is for people who are pregnant and are not sure what to do.

- It provides you with information about all of the options.
- It gives you an idea of what to think about when making a decision
- It tells you where you can get support.
- It gives you ways to help you make a decision.

This booklet will not tell you what to do, as everyone will have different thoughts and feelings about the options.

Your personal and cultural beliefs will be important when using this information to help with your decision.

This information booklet provides clear information for you to make a personal decision.



How will I know I am pregnant?

Common signs of pregnancy can include:

- missing a period
- feeling sick or vomiting
- having sore or larger breasts
- feeling dizzy and tired

Not all women who are pregnant have these signs because every woman is different.

The only way to be sure you are pregnant is by having a pregnancy test.

A pregnancy test can show if you are pregnant from around three weeks after sex.

It is helpful to find out if you are pregnant as early as possible, to help you make a decision sooner.



What is a Pregnancy Test?



A pregnancy test is done to check if a woman is pregnant or not. This can be a urine or blood test.

You can buy a urine pregnancy test from a chemist or supermarket. Instructions are simple to follow and the test is easy to do.

The test can be done in a private bathroom.

Any pregnancy tests can also be done at a Family Planning NSW clinic, women's health centre or your local GP.

Pregnancy Options

When a woman finds out she is pregnant but she has not planned to have a baby she will need to think about whether she wants to have a baby or not.

It can sometimes be a very difficult decision.



It can be useful to make a list of all the good things and all the difficult things about your options.

It is up to you to decide what happens with your pregnancy. You should not feel pressure from other people about your decision. It is your choice.

Your family or partner cannot decide for you, but it can be helpful to make a decision together.

The options are:

Continue with the pregnancy – choosing to parent

Continue with the pregnancy – adoption/foster care

Don't continue with the pregnancy – abortion also called termination of pregnancy



Continuing the pregnancy and keeping the baby

Choosing to parent

Some women choose to continue the pregnancy and look after the baby. They might look after the baby with a partner or by themselves.

Becoming a parent is a big step and it is normal to feel worried about changes that will happen.

With a partner



It can be helpful to talk with your partner about any concerns and the changes that might happen in your relationship, life and finances.

Parenting alone



Some women parent alone because their relationship may have ended or both of you may not agree with the pregnancy options available.

It is important to know that you can get help to look after your baby if it is difficult to do this on your own.



If you choose to continue the pregnancy and keep the baby, it's important to know:

- You can get support from family, friends and people you trust who can help to talk about your options.
- You can ask your doctor or a counsellor for more information about where to get help with looking after your baby.

Questions to consider

How do I feel about being a parent?

I feel this way because...

Is there anything I need to know about continuing the pregnancy and choosing to be a parent?

Adoption and fostering

Some women choose to continue the pregnancy but have someone else look after the baby. This could be someone you know or do not know.

This can be a legal agreement or it can be an informal choice made by a family.

Adoption is when both parents sign a legal agreement for someone else to raise their child.

Both birth parents of the baby have to agree to the adoption of the baby. They can keep in contact with the child by agreeing on an adoption plan with the adopting parent/s.

Sometimes a baby is looked after by another family for a short or long time. This is called **fostering**.



There are two different types of foster care.

Temporary foster care: this is when another family looks after a child for a short time while the parent sorts out housing, money or personal problems. A parent can visit their child while they are in temporary foster care.

Long-term foster care: this is when a child is in long term foster care. While the child is in foster care, the foster parents have the right to make decisions about the child's life. Birth parents can still have the right to contact the child.

Questions to consider

How do I feel about adoption/foster care?

I feel this way because.....

Is there more I need to know about adoption/foster care?

Abortion

Some women who are pregnant might choose to end the pregnancy. This is called having an abortion or termination of pregnancy.

An abortion is usually done early in a pregnancy. In NSW there are two safe and confidential options for abortion.

The type of abortion a woman chooses will depend on how many weeks she is pregnant, what services are available in her area and what is most suitable for her life circumstances.

It is up to you to decide whether you want to have an abortion or not. You should not feel pressure from other people about your decision. It is your choice.

A doctor or specialist can help give information about abortion services in your area that you could go to.



Surgical abortion: This is a procedure available at private clinics. In some situations it may be available in a public hospital. In NSW you do not need a referral from a doctor for this procedure at a clinic. Call the clinic for an appointment.

Some clinics will do a surgical abortion up to week 12 of the pregnancy and a few will do the procedure up to week 20 of the pregnancy. The procedure is safe and low risk when done by an experienced doctor.

The procedure can be quick and depends on how far the pregnancy has developed, but you will need to be at the clinic for a number of hours. It can be helpful to have a friend or someone you trust for support.



Before you make an appointment;

- It is important to know how many weeks pregnant you are. If you don't know, you can find out by having an ultrasound. You will need to see a doctor to get a referral for an ultrasound.
- Once you know how many weeks pregnant you are, you need to find out what the clinic can provide for you.

Abortion



Medical abortion: This is available through private clinics, some GPs, some specialists and from a telemedicine medical abortion service. The woman will be prescribed medications in the form of tablets. One tablet (mifepristone) is usually taken in the clinic and second tablets (misoprostol) are taken 24-48 hours later.

Medical abortion is carried out when the woman is less than nine weeks pregnant.

The GP or clinic workers will explain what will happen and will give you the 24 hour phone number for any questions you may have after taking the tablets.

After the tablets are taken most women will have cramping pains in the lower stomach that can last for about 24 hours. You will have bleeding from the vagina that will last for about two weeks.

You may also experience:

- Fever – feeling hot
- Chills – feeling cold
- Nausea – feeling sick
- Vomiting

A woman can take pain relief tablets to help with the pain. It is also important to have a friend or someone for support with you at home.

Cost of abortion in NSW

Abortion may cost different amounts of money, depending on where you go. The price will depend on:

- Whether you have a Medicare or health care card
- The number of weeks you are pregnant
- Whether you choose to have a surgical or medical abortion

Payment is usually made on the day of the appointment.

Legal information

Abortion is allowed in all states and territories in Australia under certain conditions. It must be done by a registered doctor.

Your family, partner or others cannot decide if you should have an abortion or not, but it can be helpful to make a decision together.

If your partner or family forces you to make a decision you are not happy with, there are support services that you can contact. For more information about having an abortion, speak to someone who can help in exploring all your options such as your doctor, Family Planning NSW clinic or a social worker.

Talking to a health care worker is private and no one else needs to know about the conversation

Professional interpreters can be organised by the clinic to interpret in your language if you ask for this. This can make it easier for you to understand medical words and ask any important questions. You must have enough information to be able to understand and make your own decision.



Questions to consider

How do I feel about abortion?

I feel this way because...

Is there more I need to know about having an abortion?

Help to make a decision

There are many things to think about when you are making your decision. If you are not sure what to do it is important to remember you are not alone.

It can be helpful to write down your thoughts and feelings. You could take this record with you to the doctor, Family Planning NSW or support worker who will help in talking about your options.

HEAD = INFORMATION

Do I have all the information
about my options to help
make a decision?

HANDS = REAL LIFE ISSUES

Who can help me?
Will my partner help me?
How will my family and
community react?

If I have the baby:

Where will I live?
How will I earn money?

HEART = HOW DO I FEEL?

How do I feel about being pregnant?
How do I feel about the different options?

It can be helpful to write down your feelings and thoughts and to think about how you might feel at different points in the future.

Parenting		
	Good things	Difficult things
12 weeks from now		
1 year from now		
5 years from now		
Adoption/ Foster Care		
	Good things	Difficult things
12 weeks from now		
1 year from now		
5 years from now		
Abortion		
	Good things	Difficult things
12 weeks from now		
1 year from now		
5 years from now		

Contraception

Whatever your decision, it is useful to think about your contraception options for the future. Contraception can help to prevent a pregnancy from happening if you do not want to be pregnant.

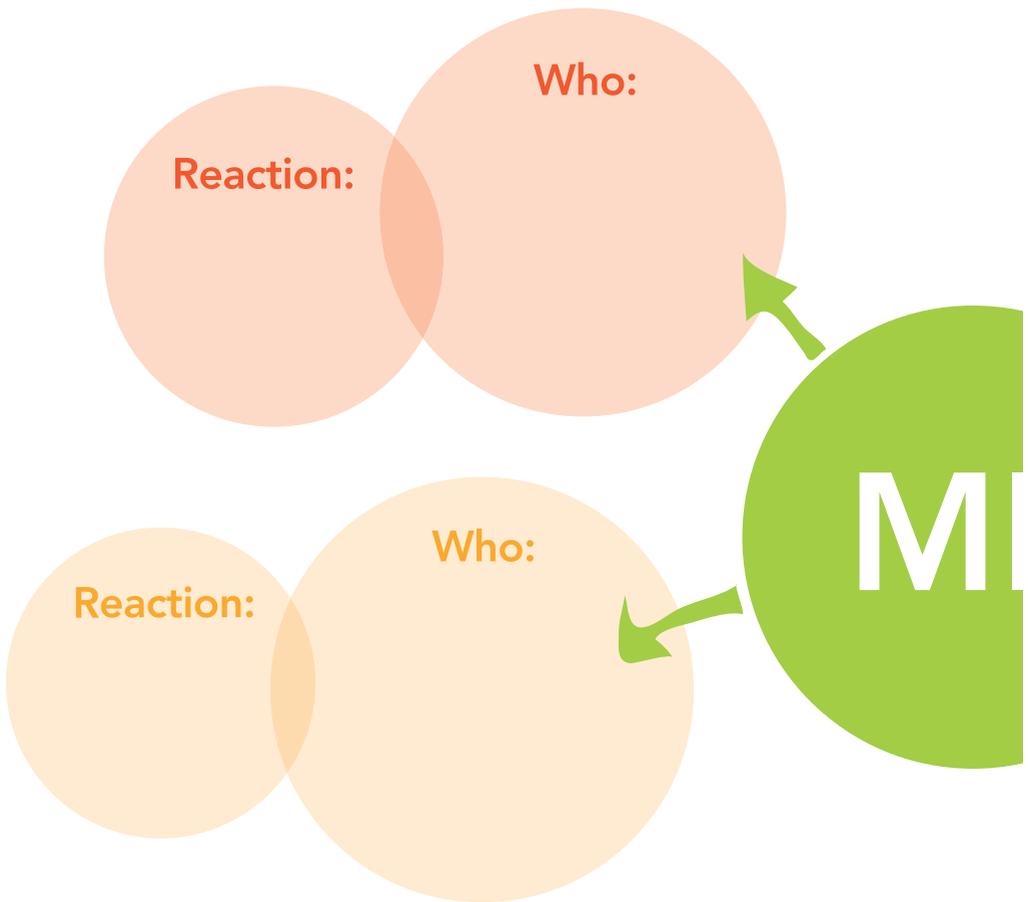
Contraception can be started straight after you have had an abortion or given birth. You can speak to a doctor or nurse at any Family Planning NSW clinic or call Family Planning NSW Talkline on **1300 658 886**.

There is information in different languages about the different contraception methods available at **www.fpnsw.org.au**. Refer to *Know your health: Contraceptive Options* for more information about effective methods of contraception available at **www.fpnsw.org.au**.

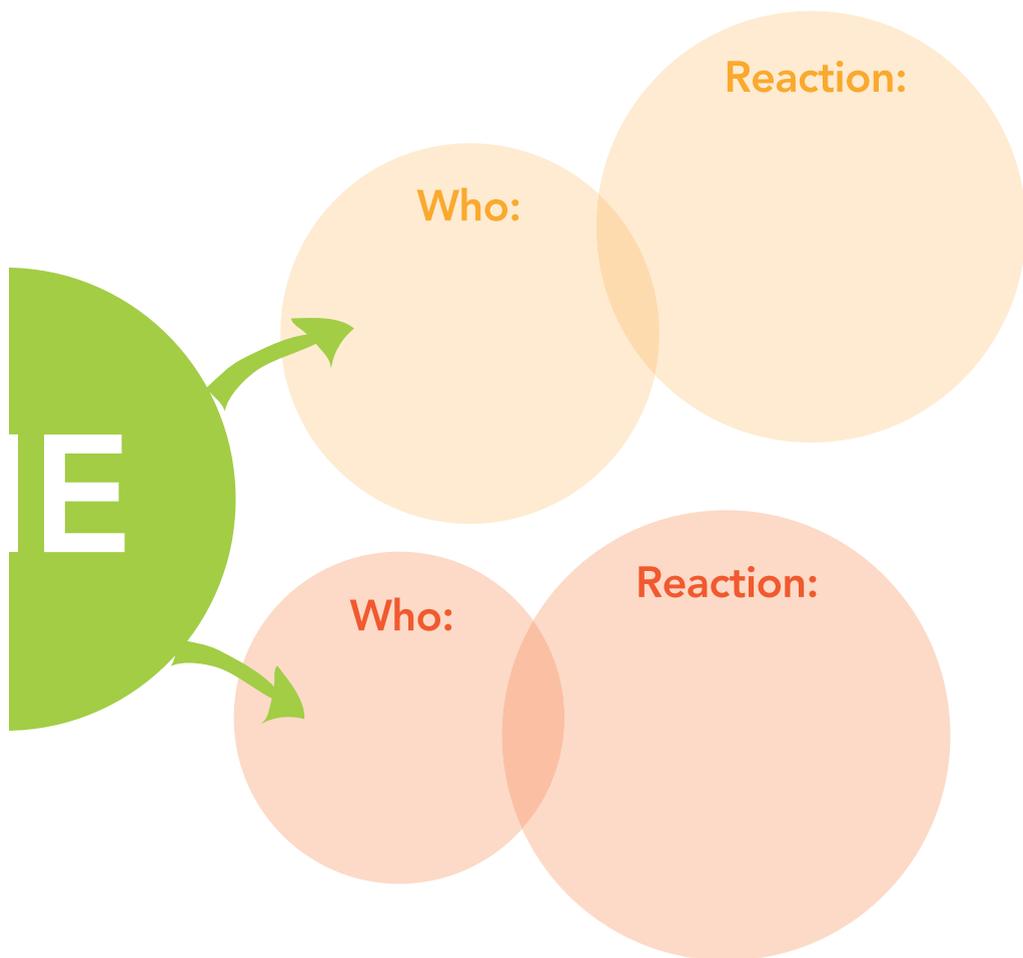


Relationship and support networks

It can be difficult to talk to someone close to you, but talking to someone you trust can sometimes help when making a decision.



Whatever you decide to do, it is important to consider who you can call for support.



Relationship and support networks

If you need someone to talk to, you can call:



It is a confidential telephone and email service where you can talk privately to a nurse. It is open 8.30am-5.00pm weekdays

You can also visit www.fpnsw.org.au/talkline or visit a Family Planning clinic and talk to a nurse or a doctor

In Crisis?



Please call Lifeline **13 11 14**. It is open 24 hours, 7 days a week. They provide telephone and online counselling services for help when needed.

You can also visit www.lifeline.org.au.

Counselling and support services

Department of Human Services (Centrelink)

Provides information about the range of Centrelink payments available if you continue the pregnancy. <http://goo.gl/pXboLp>

Family Referral Services (FRS)

Providing information and support and access to services, for families who are in financial distress and are facing challenges accessing services and support. Please visit this link to find the phone number for your nearest service: <http://goo.gl/pj4KCm>

Family Relationship Advice Line and Centres – 1800 050 321

The Family Relationship Advice Line is available from 8 am to 8 pm, Monday to Friday, and 10 am to 4 pm on Saturday (local time), except national public holidays. Family Relationship Centres provide family dispute resolution (mediation) and advice to enable people to achieve workable parenting arrangements outside the Court system. For further information please visit: <http://goo.gl/SJqlz6>

Adoption and Permanent Care Services – (02) 9716 3000

email: adoption@community.nsw.gov.au

Further information about the adoption process and alternatives can be found at: <http://goo.gl/sGL15t>

Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS) – 131 450

24 Hours, every day of the year. A free interpreting service provided by the Department of Immigration and Border Protection to provide interpreting services for people who do not speak English and for agencies and businesses that need to communicate with their non-English speaking clients. www.tisnational.gov.au



For more information, visit our
website www.fpnsw.org.au or call
the **Family Planning NSW Talkline**
on **1300 658 886**.