

Family Planning

Welfare Association of NT Inc.

ABN 38 812 238 738

Family Planning Welfare Association of the NT Inc exists to provide quality health care and education services in reproductive and sexual health

UNPLANNED PREGNANCY

ARE YOU PREGNANT?

Find out if you really are pregnant before you start worrying. A URINE TEST can tell you if you are pregnant, but there can be a three week delay from the time of unprotected sex to possible detection of pregnancy.

Take a urine sample first thing in the morning (preferably) in a very clean container and keep it cool until you see the nurse/doctor or Family Planning can organise this to be done on the premises when you come in. The test only takes a couple of minutes and it gives you a good opportunity to talk about how you feel. Home urine pregnancy test kits are also available from the supermarket and pharmacy. Read the instructions carefully.

Alternatively a blood test can be performed, but are not routinely done.

If you are not pregnant don't risk it again, use the appointment to discuss a safer method of contraception.

The emergency contraceptive pill can be taken if you have had unprotected sex and are worried about becoming pregnant. The emergency contraceptive pill (or sometimes known as the morning after pill) can be taken up to 5 days (120hrs) after sex. It is a hormonal pill used to reduce the risk of pregnancy after unprotected sex and is available from pharmacies and clinics without a script.

PREGNANT - WHAT NOW?

1. Continue with the pregnancy
2. Stop the pregnancy

This is a big decision and deserves serious consideration, don't rush your decision – find out as much as you can and talk to people whose advice you respect. You know best what your opinions, needs, and plans are, don't let other people pressure you into their choice – remember it's your decision, not theirs.

If you are thinking about having an abortion you can't avoid the decision for too long as there is a time limit. By not making a decision, time will make one for you!

1. CONTINUE THE PREGNANCY

a) Keeping the baby

This decision includes a lot of joy, a lot of work and a lot of responsibility. Becoming a parent means putting the needs of another before your own.

This decision may demand you giving up an education, a job, accepting a drop to one income between couples, or going on a supportive parents benefit by yourself. There are many sources of help you can use during the pregnancy and while raising your child.

Classes to prepare you for childbirth and parenting are widely available and strongly recommended, especially for a first pregnancy.

You will need to have regular checkups to ensure you and the baby are in good health.

b) Adoption

By giving up your baby for adoption, you legally give up your rights to the child, who is placed with an approved couple who become the child's legal parents.

Think about the future, and not just your situation now. If you feel that you couldn't cope with bringing a child up at this point in your life, but don't want to have a termination, you could choose to adopt the baby out.

You cannot agree to give up the baby for adoption until he or she is seven days only. You are entitled to see the baby in this time even if you've already made up your mind. Even after signing the consent for adoption form you have 28 days in which to rethink or change your mind.

If you do change your mind, contact the adoption unit immediately and they will let you know what to do. **Remember** this must be done within 28 days of signing the consent form. After that it is too late.

2. Termination (Abortion)

(Medical termination (Pills) and surgical terminations are both offered in the NT)

If you decide to have an abortion remember the earlier it's performed the safer it is. There is a slightly increased risk to your health after the first 12 weeks of pregnancy.

In the Northern Territory a termination is legal:

- a) To access a Medical termination you need to be under 9 weeks (63 days) pregnant. You need to consult with one doctor who is required to undertake an ultrasound/STI and blood testing. The Medication called RU486 will be dispensed to you if you meet all the guidelines.
- b) To access a surgical termination you need to be under 14 weeks and consult with two doctors. The termination is performed in hospital or a free standing health clinic offering surgical procedures. Termination of pregnancy over 14 weeks is available interstate and the NTG will provide some funding support.

It is normal to feel a mixture of mixed emotions that's why it's recommended to have a friend or counsellor to talk and support you through any of the choices you make.

Family Planning NT is providing Medical abortion services. The cost will be Medicare bulk billing only.

For further information call:

Family Planning on 8948 0144

NT Health direct 1800 022 222

Pregnancy, birth and baby helpline 1800 882 436