

Abortion Reporting Requirements

Human life must be respected and protected absolutely from the moment of conception. From the first moment of his existence, a human being must be recognized as having the rights of a person - among which is the inviolable right of every innocent being to life. Since it must be treated from conception as a person, the embryo must be defended in its integrity, cared for, and healed, as far as possible, like any other human being. (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 2270, 2274)

Church teaching

- ★ Man's life comes from God; it is his gift, his image and imprint, a sharing in his breath of life. God therefore is the sole Lord of this life: man cannot do with it as he wills. God himself makes this clear to Noah after the Flood: "For your own lifeblood, too, I will demand an accounting...and from man in regard to his fellow man I will demand an accounting for human life" (Gen 9:5). The biblical text is concerned to emphasize how the sacredness of life has its foundation in God and in his creative activity: "For God made man in his own image" (Gen 9:6). Human life and death are thus in the hands of God, in his power: "In his hand is the life of every living thing and the breath of all mankind", exclaims Job (12:10). "The Lord brings to death and brings to life; he brings down to Sheol and raises up" (1 Sam 2:6). He alone can say: "It is I who bring both death and life" (Dt 32:39). (*Pope John Paul II, The Gospel of Life*)
- ★ The inalienable rights of the person must be recognized and respected by civil society and the political authority. These human rights depend neither on single individuals nor on parents; nor do they represent a concession made by society and the State: they pertain to human nature and are inherent in the person by virtue of the creative act from which the person took his or her origin. Among such fundamental rights one should mention in this regard: every human being's right to life and physical integrity from the moment of conception until death; the rights of the family and of marriage as an institution and, in this area, the child's right to be conceived, brought into the world and brought up by his parents. (*Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, The Gift of Life*)
- ★ The problem of procured abortion and of its possible legal liberalization has become more or less everywhere the subject of impassioned discussions. These debates would be less grave were it not a question of human life, a primordial value, which must be protected and promoted. Everyone understands this, although many look for reasons, even against all evidence, to promote the use of abortion. (*Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, Declaration on Procured Abortion*)

Resources

- ★ **Texas Catholic Conference** Abortion page (www.TXcatholic.org/abortion.asp)
- ★ **US Conference of Catholic Bishops** Abortion page (www.USCCB.org/prolife/issues/abortion/)
- ★ **Second Look Project** (www.SecondLookProject.org)
- ★ **National Catholic Bioethics Center** (www.NCBCenter.org)
- ★ **Texas Department of State Health Services** (www.dshs.state.tx.us/)
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Accurate reporting of abortions in Texas is necessary. This data can be used to track the effectiveness of legislation and other efforts aimed at reducing abortion in Texas. It can also help abortion alternatives providers and other groups to analyze factors that correlate with various abortion trends and create targeted strategies aimed at reducing abortion. Because Texas abortion providers are already required to report statistics, the process of adding additional statistics for reporting does not add an overbearing burden to abortion facilities. In addition, requiring clinics to report instances where a woman is injured allows the collection of data which can be used as a public information tool and to identify injuries correlated with specific procedures.

The risk of abortion are very real. See below for information on side effects and risks of different types of abortion, from *A Woman's Right to Know*, produced by the Texas Department of State Health Services.

Abortion Risks

The further along in the pregnancy, the greater the chance of serious complications and the greater the risk of dying from the abortion procedure.

- One death per every 530,000 abortions if you are at eight weeks or less.
- One death per 17,000 abortions for pregnancies at 16–20 weeks.
- One death per 6,000 abortions at 21 weeks and more.

Medical (Nonsurgical) Abortion

- Cramping of the uterus or pelvic pain.
- Nausea or vomiting.
- Diarrhea.
- Warmth or chills.
- Headache.
- Dizziness.
- Fatigue.
- Inability to get pregnant due to infection or complication of an operation.
- Allergic reaction to the medicines.
- Hemorrhage (heavy bleeding) possibly requiring treatment with an operation, a blood transfusion, or both.

Abortion by Labor Induction (Medical Induction)

- Nausea or vomiting.
- Diarrhea.
- Fever.
- Infection.
- Complications from anesthesia such as respiratory problems, nausea and vomiting, headaches, or drug reactions.
- Inability to get pregnant due to infection or complication from an operation.
- A possible hysterectomy as a result of complication or injury during the procedure.
- Damage or rupture of the uterus (womb).
- The possibility of a live-born baby.
- Water intoxication.

Abortion by Labor Induction (Medical Induction) continued

- Incomplete removal of the unborn child, placenta, or contents of the uterus requiring an operation.
- Hemorrhage (heavy bleeding).
- Emergency treatment for any of the above problems, including the possible need to treat with an operation, medicines, or a blood transfusion.

Dilatation and Extraction (D&X)**

- A hole in the uterus (uterine perforation) or other damage to the uterus.
 - Injury to the bowel or bladder.
 - A cut or torn cervix (cervical laceration).
 - Incomplete removal of the unborn child, placenta, or contents of the uterus, requiring an additional operation.
 - Infection.
 - Complications from anesthesia such as respiratory problems, nausea and vomiting, headaches, or drug reactions.
 - Inability to get pregnant due to infection or complication from an operation.
 - A possible hysterectomy as a result of complication or injury during the procedure.
 - Hemorrhage (heavy bleeding).
 - Emergency treatment for any of the above problems, including the possible need to treat with an operation, medicines, or a blood transfusion.
 - Rarely, death.
- **NOTE:** Former Surgeon General C. Everett Koop and the Physician's Ad Hoc Coalition for Truth stated in 1996 that this type of procedure "... is never medically necessary to protect a mother's health or her future fertility. On the contrary, this procedure can pose a significant threat to both."