

DOES ABORTION HURT?

In the Questions and Answers section of the Planned Parenthood website, this is their response to the question, “Does getting an abortion hurt?”:

Some kind of painkiller is used in all abortions. Most women feel cramps. You may have cramps during and after a vacuum aspiration. You will feel strong cramps with medication abortion — which is done with medicine instead of instruments.

Abortion.com answers the same question this way:

The actual procedure is completed under anesthesia so the patient feels no pain during the abortion. After the procedure, most women feel cramping, similar to menstrual cramps, for several days.

SexEtc.org, an “amoral” sex-education website for teens says this:

The level of pain varies from person to person. Both medical and surgical abortions cause some amount of cramping. These cramps can feel like light to heavy menstrual cramps, like when you get your period. Most women report cramps that last from five minutes to a half hour. It is normal to experience some bleeding during and after both the medical and surgical abortion. You can use pads like when you have your period. Most women find that Tylenol is enough to help with their pain, and they are physically capable of returning to work or school after a surgical abortion.

All three of these websites support abortion on demand. One claims abortion is a “no pain” procedure, the other two grant that there is some pain, but do their best to downplay it. Now consider some of the remarks from the real-life testimonies found on this website.

I had an abortion 12 years ago, and I have suffered from it since the day it was done. There is no grief worse than losing a child, unless it is knowing that you have intentionally killed your own, out of sheer selfishness. I have had nightmares, flashbacks of the procedure including the physical pain I experienced, and periods of severe depression. I am still taking 3 medications for depression and anxiety. I wish I could go back in time and take it all back - but we can only move forward.

July 30, 2004

I feel that women should be informed about the affects of abortion. I had an abortion once and I live with the guilt and pain every day. When you are in such a vulnerable state, and you turn to these so-called counselors at these clinics, they make it seem unreal, like this is not a baby. And then you are herded into a room like cattle, called by numbers and before you can even really process what is happening, it is over. You are left with so much pain. I know what I did. I will live with it forever. I now have 3 children whom I look at and wander what the one I terminated would have been like. So everyone who feels that we, the ones who go through this, do not know pain, we do. More than you will ever know.

June 3, 2002

I am 22 years old, and I got pregnant at the age of 20. I was raised in a Christian home, went

to a Christian college, and opposed abortion to every degree. When I became pregnant, abortion “seemed” like the only option, but as time went by, I put the abortion in the back of my mind because I dearly loved my little, innocent child... I talked to my child, named my child, and tried to make the person I was with bond with it also. I put the abortion off until the last possible week, my 19th week of pregnancy. By this time the abortion cost \$1300 that I did not have. I didn’t have the money for anesthesia and I had to stay awake for the 15 minute, very painful and eye-opening experience...There isn’t a day that goes by that I don’t think about my baby and wish things could be changed somehow.... I want to reach out and tell women the horror I had to live through, to somehow mend what I’ve done if just a little bit.

February 18, 2002

If you visit the *Rachel’s Vineyard* website or visit *Think About It Online*, you will find more testimony of the pain and misery brought on by abortion. In “My Abortion Story”, a five page account from the Think About It website, you will find the following:

[TheabortionistandI]hadthiswholeconversationasheplacedsticksofseaweedinmyvaginatosdilatemycervix.Idon’trememberwhattheyarecalled,butithurt.Theclampswerecold,andIfeltlikeastuffedturkey.

He poked 5-6 sticks in me and told me I would soon get cramps. The pain started immediately. I tried to get off the table, but the pain was so intense that I had to lie back down. He stayed until I could raise myself up.

I wanted to go get [my boyfriend] so he could rub my stomach like he had done so many nights before. They told me I couldn’t go back out to him since my procedure had already started. They put me back in the TV room, and I made a cold and uncomfortable bed out of the chairs.

I was told I would only have to wait one hour for my surgery. If I could stand the pain that long, I would be fine. An hour passed. I tossed and turned, trying to get comfortable, but I was so cold and in so much pain. I wanted to go to the bathroom and take those foreign objects out of my body. I wanted to go get [my boyfriend], so I didn’t have to be alone. I was scared and hurt.

The sum of these accounts, from women who have actually had abortions, tell a very different story than those found on most abortion services websites. Of course, while some level of physical pain is clearly part of the abortion process, it is the emotional pain of abortion which is far more crippling. The bottom line is this. The question of temporary, physical pain is a relatively minor one. The process of giving birth is itself an incredibly painful experience. Whether a woman chooses abortion or birth, there will be physical pain involved. This cannot be avoided. The determining factor must be something far beyond the very limited scope of physical affliction. In the end, the question, “Does abortion hurt?”, is far less significant than the question, “Does abortion kill a baby?”. This is the question which must be answered.