

# Emotional care following abortion



## Information for patients Gynaecology

### Will having an abortion affect my emotional health?

Women with an unintended pregnancy are no more or less likely to suffer emotionally whether they have an abortion or continue with the pregnancy and have the baby.

If you have had a past history of mental health problems then you may experience further problems whether you choose to have an abortion or to continue with the pregnancy.

### What will I feel like following the abortion?

Nobody knows how you will be feeling following the abortion. This experience is personal to you. Many women experience a feeling of loss after an abortion at some time, even if they were very certain about their decision. This may not mean that the decision was wrong, but just difficult to make.

Some women may feel isolated following an abortion. This is usually because having an abortion is such a private experience that it may be very hard to talk about it with others.

Some women, on the other hand, may feel relieved and unburdened. It is therefore not surprising that many women will wonder if what they feel is normal.

The words below are some feelings experienced by women. These are described in their own words.

Euphoria - relief, feeling strong, good, energetic	"I felt so good, like a weight had been lifted"
Anger - this may be particularly focused on others/partner	"Why did he get me into this mess?"
Shock - detachment, unreality	"I wandered around in a daze, as if I was on automatic"
Guilt - blaming yourself / others, feelings you have done the wrong thing. That others know and disapprove or are hurt by your actions.	"I should have taken better care"

### Who should I contact if I wish to discuss my feelings?

If you wish to discuss your feelings before or after the abortion, please contact the Counselling Service:

- **0114 226 8590**

Alternative formats can be available on request. Email: [sth.alternativeformats@nhs.net](mailto:sth.alternativeformats@nhs.net)

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