

Making a decision whether to have an abortion or to place your child for adoption is a tough choice. Here are some things to consider that will help you make the right decision.

ADOPTION

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What is adoption? Adoption is the choice to carry your baby to term (until birth) and then place the baby with a couple able to care for the child. In the United States, there is an average of 36 couples waiting for every child that is adopted.¹

Is adoption hard? Adoption is a hard process for a birth mother. There will be times of heartache and pain. Handing your baby over to another couple is very difficult and emotional. The hurt will continue for some time, although healing will normally occur.

What can go wrong? Adoption is a process with few possible negative issues. The most common is called dissolution (the adoption fails after it is finalized and the child is returned to foster care or the birth parents). The younger the child, the less frequently dissolution occurs.⁴ Less than one percent of infant adoptions disrupt.⁵ Adoption will also bring about many questions for the child who was adopted as they work through their status as an adopted child.

What about the baby? In most adoptions today the birthmother is able to “choose” the adoptive couple from profiles. You can choose the family you believe is the most appropriate for your baby. The couples are often those who aren’t able to have children of their own. Adopted children are normally loved for a lifetime.

What about the future? Adoption is a way to give your child a life of love and support when you are unable to offer it. It is also a way to give yourself a chance to grow and mature out of the situation that required the adoption in the first place. Mothers who choose adoption do not forget their adopted child, but they are normally able to see that their situation at the time was not a good one for a newborn child. Adoption gives a future to both the child and the mother.

Is adoption best? Unplanned pregnancies are tough and are surrounded by many different emotions and voices telling you to do one thing or another. When looking at the choice between adoption and abortion, it is important to choose the one that protects both the life of your baby and your future emotional and physical health. Adoption is not easy — but it is much better than abortion.

What is abortion? Abortion is the act of ending a pregnancy by killing the baby who is growing inside the mother. Abortions can be done using chemicals, surgical methods, or both.² Abortion is most often done in clinics in one or two visits.

Is abortion hard? Abortion has a serious risk of emotional distress. Following an abortion, many women will experience depression, feelings of guilt and anger, sleep disturbance, or loss of interest in work or sex.³ The emotional risks are real and can last a lifetime.

What can go wrong? Abortion has many possible side effects. The risks of abortion depend on the procedure used, but the most common methods carry the risks of cramping, abdominal pain, infection (which can lead to serious illness and even the mother’s death), perforation of the uterus, cervical incompetence (a condition in which the cervix opens too early, increasing the risk of a miscarriage in future pregnancies), and injury to the cervix.^{6,7}

What about the baby? Abortion is not a simple operation. The goal is to end the life of the baby and remove him or her from the uterus of the mother. In most abortions, the baby is either sucked apart and out through a small tube called a cannula, or pulled apart with forceps and removed.²

What about the future? The majority of women who have abortions experience feelings of guilt (93%), depression (88%), anger (81%), sorrow (92%), grief (85%), bitterness (75%), despair (74%), and shame (91%). Women who have abortions also have flashbacks to the abortion (63%), hysterical outbreaks (51%), uncontrollable weeping (70%), suicidal feelings (56%), a general sense of emptiness (83%), quicker tempers (59%), and are more violent when angered (48%).⁸

Is abortion best? Abortion may seem like a good solution to a “problem” pregnancy. Abortion is not that simple, though. It brings with it huge emotional issues, possible physical complications, and participation in an act that kills a baby who is waiting to be born. Abortion is not the solution to anything. Instead, consider adoption as a way of giving life and love as a gift to your baby.