

There is no right or wrong choice to make when you discover you are pregnant. There is only the best choice for YOU. This card is here to help you understand what your choices are, and point you in the direction of resources that can help you think through your options.

Abortion

Abortion means ending a pregnancy. There are two abortion options: in-clinic abortion and an abortion pill (aka medication abortion). Both of these options are safe. Depending on your location within the United States, laws may impact the availability of abortion.

Choosing the right abortion for you depends on how far along you are in your pregnancy, what is available at health centers near you, and what feels most comfortable to you.

Adoption

Adoption is when you give up your parental rights after giving birth. The child then becomes a full and permanent legal member of another family. There are various forms of adoption you may choose.

Open Adoption: The birth family and adoptive family are in direct contact, with support from the adoption agency as needed. Deciding how much contact you want is part of the agreement that you and the adoptive family make.

Partially-Open Adoption: Sometimes called a mediated adoption, information and updates between the birth and adoptive families always pass through the adoption agency. You won't have direct contact/communication with the family.

Closed Adoption: Zero identifying information is exchanged, and no contact is allowed between the birth family and the adoptive family or the child.

Parenting

Parenting can be one of the most rewarding experiences in life. An unplanned pregnancy does not mean that you should not and cannot continue the pregnancy. The choice is yours.

Parenting is a big commitment. It is important that you carefully consider whether having a baby now is right for you and your family. If you know you want to have a baby, but just weren't trying to have one right now, take some time to think about whether and how you might make it work.

Options for Unintended Pregnancy

I'm pregnant. What are my choices?

If you have an unplanned or unwanted pregnancy, you have three options. You can raise the baby, choose adoption, or have an abortion. It is important to talk to people you trust and get accurate information. You should think about your goals, religious and cultural concerns, finances, and support from family and friends when making your decision.

Where can I get help?

It is important to see a doctor as soon as you think you are pregnant to make sure you and the baby are okay. Your doctor can give you information to help you decide what to do. There are also many local and national support groups that can help. These support groups have counselors you can call to get advice, as well as financial help, parenting support groups, social services, and listings of medical clinics. Be aware that so-called "crisis pregnancy centers" and "pregnancy resource centers" may provide biased and inaccurate information. Your doctor may also have a list of local support groups.

Listed below are some of the national support groups for each choice. In addition, here are some other sources of information from FamilyDoctor.org:

<http://familydoctor.org/familydoctor/en/pregnancy-newborns/your-body/what-to-do-when-your-pregnancy-is-unexpected.html>

<http://familydoctor.org/familydoctor/en/drugs-procedures-devices/procedures-devices/ending-a-pregnancy.html>

Raising the baby

If you decide to raise the baby, you may have questions about how to pay for medical care, who to turn to for help, and how you can still reach your goals. The following local and national support groups can help:

National Parent Helpline
<http://www.nationalparenthelpline.org/find-support>

The National Parenting Center
<http://www.tnpc.com>

Need Help Paying Bills
http://www.needhelppayingbills.com/html/charities_and_organizations_th.html

Single Parent Advocate
<http://www.singleparentadvocate.org>

The Single Parents Network
<http://singleparentsnetwork.com>

Adoption

Adoption may be a good option for you and your baby, but it can be a confusing process. You may have questions about what type of adoption is best, which group is best, and if the baby will be with a good family. The following support groups can help:

Adopt America Network
<http://www.adoptamericanetwork.org>

Adoption Network Law Center
<http://www.adoptionnetwork.com>

American Adoptions
<http://www.americanadoptions.com>

Child Welfare Information Gateway (search for adoption services in your state)
<http://www.childwelfare.gov/nfcad>



Options for Unintended Pregnancy *(continued)*

Abortion

Abortions are safe, and many women have them. If you decide to have an abortion, you may have questions about the laws in your state, what type of abortion to choose, which clinics are safe, what problems you might have after the abortion, and medical care and support after the abortion. The following support groups can help:

National Abortion Federation

<http://prochoice.org/think-youre-pregnant/resources>

Planned Parenthood

<http://www.plannedparenthood.org>

Provide

<http://www.provideaccess.org>

Summit Medical Centers

<http://www.summitcenters.com/resourceful-links.html>

Women on Web

<http://www.womenonweb.org>

Notes:

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This handout is provided to you by your family doctor and the American Academy of Family Physicians. Other health-related information is available from the AAFP online at <http://familydoctor.org>.

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