Intensity & Duration Guide

What to expect, and how long it may last

What Women Experience *

Level	How Many Women
Level 1: Easier than expected	Some women
Level 2: Difficult but manageable	Some more women
Level 3: Very difficult	About half of women
Level 4: Concerning	A few women
Level 5: Medical emergency	Rare

* a guide, not a clinical scale

How Long Does It Take?

Phase	Mifepristone + Misoprostol	Misoprostol Alone
Cramping/bleeding begins	Generally within a few hours	May begin 1–4 hours after the first dose
Pregnancy passes	Most within 4–5 hours; may take longer	Most within about 24 hours; some take longer
Heaviest bleeding	Peaks several hours after misoprostol; heaviest phase lasts 1–2 days	Usually starts after the third dose; lasts 1–3 days
Bleeding/spotting afterward	Typically 9–16 days; sometimes longer	Can last 2 weeks or sometimes longer
Cramping	Expected up to a few days	Expected up to a few days

These are ranges, not a schedule your body has to follow.
For signs that need medical attention, see the Normal vs Not Normal guide.

Download or print this guide and keep it handy.

Under review — provisional version. This guide is being reviewed and refined. The ranges shown describe typical experiences and individual experiences vary. See YMAC's Medical Sources for the principal sources used.