

1. An abortion can be obtained in Canada without parental consent.

1. FACT. Parental consent is not legally required for an abortion in Canada, but some hospitals have different policies. In general, clinics will perform abortions without parental consent as long as they are sure that the youth understands what they are doing. Doctors often encourage youth to tell a guardian or someone they trust so that they can get support from someone they know.

2. Abortion can be performed surgically or medically (by taking pills).

2. FACT. Both surgical and medical abortions are available in Québec.

3. Abortion causes breast cancer.

3. MYTH. The relationship between induced and spontaneous abortion and breast cancer risk has been the subject of extensive research beginning in the late 1950s. All the studies that have shown a connection between abortion and breast cancer have turned out to be seriously flawed. Recent studies consistently show no link between abortion and cancer and the National Cancer Institute (United States) has concluded that, “having an abortion or miscarriage does not increase a woman’s subsequent risk of developing breast cancer”.

4. Abortion is a safe and simple medical procedure.

4. FACT. Abortion is safer than having your tonsils out. When done properly, it poses no risk of infertility, future miscarriage or ectopic pregnancy. The overall complication rate is less than 1%.

5. Making abortion illegal will stop abortions from taking place.

5. MYTH. In countries where abortion is illegal, people still get abortions, but they are forced to seek out abortions in dangerous and unsanitary conditions or without the supervision of a doctor. According to a 2007 study by the WHO (World Health Organization) and the Alan Guttmacher Institute, 68,000 women die every year from unsafe abortions because of a lack of access to safe and legal abortions. The most efficient way to decrease the number of abortions is to provide sex education and access to contraception, in order to prevent unwanted pregnancies.

6. Most people who have abortions experience severe and long-lasting psychological trauma.

6. MYTH. People experience a mix of emotions after an abortion, ranging from initial trauma to relief. Lasting psychological trauma from abortion is very rare, as long as adequate support is given and the abortion is done in a safe and non-judgmental atmosphere. People who are given accurate health information and the freedom to choose which pregnancy option is best for them usually feel at peace with their decision.

7. Abortion is used as a birth control method.

7. MYTH. The decision of abortion is not taken lightly and is based on complex factors. In fact, in countries where birth control and abortion are both readily available, such as the Netherlands, the abortion rate is very low because access to contraception decreases the number of unwanted pregnancies.

8. 90% of abortions are performed within the first 12 weeks of pregnancy.

8. FACT. Abortion is legal in Canada at any point in a pregnancy, but 90% of abortions are performed in the first trimester, and no doctor will perform abortions past about 20 or 21 weeks unless it's for serious health or genetic reasons.

9. You need to prove to a doctor why you need to have an abortion.

9. MYTH. Every person has different priorities in their life and should be allowed to choose what is important to them. Legally, it is not up to doctors or anyone else to decide whether a person's reasons are “good enough” for getting an abortion.

10. Abortion is expensive in Québec.

10. MYTH. Abortion in Québec is free for people with Québec health care.