Safety of medical abortion up to 10 weeks at home

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Introduction

- Portugal
  - Abortion by women’s request is legal until 76 days of pregnancy.
  - Two methods are used for abortion:
    - Surgical
    - Medical

- The rate of medical abortion is nearly 96% in the National Health System
Objectives

Evaluate:

- Demographic characteristics
- Efficacy of the medical method of abortion
- Safety of medical abortion at home before and after 9 weeks of pregnancy
- Most common complications
- Course of action to resolve complications
Methods

Retrospective evaluation
6735 ♀

January/2007 - December/2015

Group 1: < 63 days
N= 5582

Group 2: ≥ 63 days
N= 1058

Protocol:

- Mifepristone 200 mg
- Vaginal misoprostol 800 mcg after 48 hours.

Statistical analysis was made using Independent T-test; Chi-Square and Mann-Whitney U test in SPSS 20.0.
Results - sample characteristics

98.8% (n= 6641) chose medical abortion

6594 (99.3%) at home

47 (0.7%) at hospital

Mean age of women who chose medical abortion at home

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Mean Age</th>
<th>P</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Group 1 (&lt; 63 days)</td>
<td>29.1</td>
<td>0.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group 2 (≥ 63 days)</td>
<td>28.3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Results - Efficacy of medical abortion

- **Complete abortion:**
  - when there is complete expulsion of all the products of pregnancy (embryo and gestational sac).

- **Failure of medical abortion:**
  - when is still present a gestacional sac, with or without a viable embryo, after the intervention.

### Efficacy of medical abortion at home (%)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Efficacy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Group 1</td>
<td>95,1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group 2</td>
<td>92,6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

$p=0.001$

DGS, definitions of complete abortion and complications of abortion, Norma: 001/2013.
Results - Pain

- The most common side effect

- The level of pain was evaluated between Jan/2014 and Dec/2015 (1380 women)
  - Questionaire to all the women who underwent medical abortion
  - Revision appointment

- A numeric score from 0 to 10 was displayed

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No Pain</th>
<th>Moderate Pain</th>
<th>Worst Pain</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Light  Moderate  Intense  Maximal
Results - Adverse events/pain

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Intensity of pain in women who chose medical abortion at home (%)</th>
<th>Group 1</th>
<th>Group 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Light</td>
<td>N= 47</td>
<td>13,3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N= 7</td>
<td>11,1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>N= 120</td>
<td>33,9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N= 21</td>
<td>33,3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intense</td>
<td>N= 116</td>
<td>32,8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N= 22</td>
<td>34,9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maximal</td>
<td>N= 41</td>
<td>11,6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N= 11</td>
<td>17,5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

417 women complained about pain (30,2%)
Results - Complications

NHA Definitions for complications in abortion (2013):

1. Method failure
2. Incomplete abortion
3. Important hemorrhage
4. Infection (endometritis, sepsis)
5. Organ perforation/Uterine perforation
6. Uterine rupture
7. Vaginal/cervical laceration
Results - complications

Complication rate of medical abortion at home (%)

Group 1: 5.6%
Group 2: 10.2%

p = 0.001

- Incomplete abortion: Group 1 = 3.7%, Group 2 = 4.5%
- Missed abortion: Group 1 = 0.4%, Group 2 = 0.7%
- Ongoing Pregnancy: Group 1 = 1.7%
- Severe blood loss: Group 1 = 0.1%, Group 2 = 0.6%
- Endometritis: Group 1 = 0.3%, Group 2 = 0.4%

Group 1: < 63 days, N = 5582
Group 2: ≥ 63 days, N = 1058

Total: 6735 ♀
Results - hospital admission

Global complication rate and hospital admission rate due to complications in women who chose medical abortion at home (%)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Complication Rate (%)</th>
<th>Hospital Admission Rate (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Group 1</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>1.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group 2</td>
<td>10.2</td>
<td>3.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

p=0.001

p=0.02
Conclusions

- **Medical abortion at home**
  - Is more effective before 9 weeks
  - The complication rate is higher after 9 weeks

- **The most common side effect was pain**
  - Pain scores were equally distributed between the two groups