

WHO HAS SECOND-TRIMESTER ABORTIONS?

Second-trimester abortions disproportionately affect the most vulnerable and underserved populations. Provision of safe second-trimester services is critical to decreasing deaths from unsafe abortion.¹

THE FACTS

- Evidence from the United States, Singapore, India and Nepal points to high rates of young women in need of second-trimester services compared with older women.^{1,2,3,4}
- Women who recognize their pregnancy late are more likely to need second-trimester abortion.^{2,6}
- Some women need extra time to make a decision about their pregnancy due to social pressures, fears, religious beliefs, and/or changes in relationship status.²
- Women facing financial barriers to accessing health care may need to delay abortion to gather resources.⁶
- Logistical and transport barriers cause women to delay accessing care until the second trimester of pregnancy.²
- Diagnosis of fetal anomalies typically occurs in the second trimester of pregnancy.⁷
- Significant medical conditions may develop or worsen later in pregnancy and continuing the pregnancy would risk the woman's life or health.⁸
- Victims of violence have a higher risk of delayed presentation for abortion.⁹
- If a woman experiences a contraceptive failure, some methods may mask the early signs of pregnancy.²
- Rarely, there are cultural beliefs that having an abortion in the second trimester is safer than the first trimester, thus causing women to delay care.¹⁰

Studies of abortion complications globally demonstrate that a considerable percentage of women seek unsafe abortion in the second trimester and present with complications when seeking postabortion care (PAC).



17% of all abortions in **CAMBODIA**



38% of all abortions in **ETHIOPIA**



41% of all abortions in **KENYA**

INFOGRAPHIC SOURCE: African Population and Health Research Center, Ministry of Health Kenya, Ipas Kenya, & Guttmacher Institute, 2013; Fetters, Vonthanak, Picardo, & Rathavy, 2008; Gebreselassie et al., 2010.

Young women, in particular, are likely to need second-trimester abortion services.

21.7%
of abortions
had by girls
younger than 15
were in the second
trimester



12.4%
of abortions
had by girls
15 to 19 were
in the second
trimester



Data reflects the United States only.

References

- 1 Pazol, K., Creanga, A. A., Burley, K. D., & Jamieson, D. J. (2014). Abortion surveillance - United States, 2011. *MMWR Surveill Summ*, 63(11), 1-41.
- 2 Foster, D. G., & Kimport, K. (2013). Who seeks abortions at or after 20 weeks? *Perspect Sex Reprod Health*, 45(4), 210-218. doi: 10.1363/4521013
- 3 Lim, L., Wong, H., Yong, E., & Singh, K. (2012). Profiles of women presenting for abortions in Singapore: focus on teenage abortions and late abortions. *European Journal of Obstetrics & Gynecology and Reproductive Biology*, 160(2), 219-222.
- 4 Sowmini, C. V. (2013). Delay in termination of pregnancy among unmarried adolescents and young women attending a tertiary hospital abortion clinic in Trivandrum, Kerala, India. *Reprod Health Matters*, 21(41), 243-250. doi: 10.1016/S0968-8080(13)41700-7
- 5 Purcell, C., Cameron, S., Caird, L., Flett, G., Laird, G., Melville, C., & McDaid, L. M. (2014). Access to and experience of later abortion: accounts from women in Scotland. *Perspect Sex Reprod Health*, 46(2), 101-108
- 6 Kiley, J. W., Yee, L. M., Niemi, C. M., Feinglass, J. M., & Simon, M. A. (2010). Delays in request for pregnancy termination: comparison of patients in the first and second trimesters. *Contraception*, 81(5), 446-451.
- 7 Lyus, R., Robson, S., Parsons, J., Fisher, J., & Cameron, M. (2013). Second trimester abortion for fetal abnormality. *Bmj*, 3(347).
- 8 ACOG Practice Bulletin No. 135: Second-trimester abortion. (2013). *Obstet Gynecol*, 121(6), 1394-1406.
- 9 Colarossi, L., & Dean, G. (2014). Partner violence and abortion characteristics. *Women Health*, 54(3), 177-193.
- 10 Marlow, H. M., Wamugi, S., Yegon, E., Fetters, T., Wanaswa, L., & Msipa-Ndebele, S. (2014). Women's perceptions about abortion in their communities: perspectives from western Kenya. *Reprod Health Matters*, 22(43), 149-158.

For more technical and programmatic information around second trimester abortion please see www.ipas.org/2ndtritrustoolkit and www.ipas.org/clinicalupdates.



P.O. Box 9990 • Chapel Hill, NC 27515 USA
1.919.967.7052 • info@ipas.org • www.ipas.org

Photos: © Richard Lord.

The photographs used in this publication are for illustrative purposes only; they do not imply any particular attitudes, behaviors, or actions on the part of any person who appears in the photographs.

© 2015 Ipas