

ABORTION

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Abortion means the expulsion of the products of conception at any period of gestation before full term.

Law Situation in Pakistan

Since 1997, as a result of amendment of the Penal Code, abortion is allowed in the early stages of pregnancy not only to save the life of the woman, but also for providing necessary treatment.

LAW RELATING TO MISCARRIAGE

- ISQAT-E-HAMAL: (338 PPC):
- Whoever causes a woman with child whose organs have not been formed to miscarry, if such miscarriage is not caused in good faith for the purpose of saving the life of the women or providing necessary treatment to her, is said to cause

Isqat-e- Hamal.

- **3 years rigorous imprisonment if done with consent of the woman;**
- **(b) 10 years rigorous imprisonment if done without consent of the woman along with the punishment for hurt or death caused to the woman.**

ISQAT-e-JANIN

Sec 338 b PPC

whoever causes a women with child some of whose limbs or organs have been formed, to miscarry, if such miscarriage is not caused in good faith for the purpose of saving life of the woman or providing necessary treatment to her, is said to cause ISQAT- E-JANIN.

- one-twentieth of *diyat* if child is born dead
- (b) full *diyat* if child is born alive and then dies;
- (c) 7 years imprisonment as *ta'azir*;
- if there are multiple children in uterus
- then separate *diyat* or *ta'azir* for each along with punishment for hurt/death caused to the woman.

Abortion is classified into two types:

I. Natural or spontaneous

II. Unnatural:

It occurs due to interference in pregnancy called Artificial.

- Legal or justifiable
- Criminal

NATURAL ABORTION

ARTIFICIAL

Legal or Justifiable Abortion

- Therapeutic
- Eugenic
- Humanitarian
- Social

THERAPEUTIC

Eugenic

- These are the conditions where there is risk that the child if born is likely to suffer from such physical or mental abnormalities as to be seriously handicapped.

REQUIREMENTS FOR TERMINATION OF PREGNANCY

- In an emergency
- Any registered medical practitioner can terminate to save the life of woman

- Duration of pregnancy does not exceed 12 weeks
 - Opinion of one medical practitioner
- Duration exceeds 12 weeks but less than 20 weeks
 - Opinion of two registered medical practitioner

- Must be formed in good faith
- Must have experience or training in gynecology and obstetrics
- Must be carried out in a hospital maintained by government
- Written consent of woman /husband

- With proper facilities legal abortion has an extremely low mortality rate
- Usual methods are
 - Vacuum aspiration
 - Dilatation and curettage
 - Hysterectomy

Complications

- Pulmonary embolism
- Mishap associated with anesthesia
- Disseminated intravascular coagulation
- Cerebral damage (butterfly hemorrhagic infarction in the basal ganglia)
 - Intrachorionic injection of hypertonic saline
- Air embolism following vacuum aspiration
- Bleeding and infection

ILLEGAL ABORTION

- Use of drugs and chemicals
- Physical violence (general and local)
- Instrumental interference
- Insufflation of air
- Dilatation of the cervix
- Syringe aspiration

Drugs

- Normal dose of the drug
 - has no effect on uterus and fetus.
- Death
 - from toxic doses without causing abortion.

- Abortifacients divided into two types
 - Acting directly on uterus
 - Acting indirectly on uterus

Mechanical Violence

- General

- Local

Local Violence

It includes:

- i. Local irritation
- ii. Dilatation of cervix with or without rupture of membrane.

The method used depend upon the knowledge of Anatomy of Pelvic Parts.

- Unskilled
- Semiskilled
- skilled

a) **Unskilled**

Abortion Stick:

Complications :

- Sepsis
- Excoriations
- Bruising
- perforation of upper part of vagina, of the uterus
- as a result of irritation from the substances & forceful introduction of stick.

Semiskilled Interference

Abortionist uses a Higginson's Syringe & injects the substance into the uterine cavity under pressure.

The substances used are Glycerin, solution of soap, Pot permanganate, Lysol, Mercuric chloride.

Insertion of Laminaria tent into the cervix.

- It swells and dilate the cervix.
- Now a soft rubber catheter is introduced in to the uterus without perforating the membranes.
- It acts as Foreign body, uterus contracts & expels the Foreign body as well as fetus.

Uterine Sounds (Dilators):

Pointed objects are employed to rupture the membrane.

After cervix dilatation & rupture of membrane, the abortion occurs several hours later.

Complications :

- Death from shock
- Air or fat embolism
- Absorptions of poisons in the blood

Skilled Interference

1st 3 months (1st Trimester)

Next 3 months (2nd Trimester)

Last 3 months (3rd Trimester)

COMPLICATIONS OF CRIMINAL ABORTION

- Shock
- Hemorrhage
- Air or fat Emboli
- Sepsis
- Renal failure
- Disseminated intravascular coagulopathy (DIC)
- Miscellaneous

Precautions while examining case of abortion

- Preliminary particulars must be noted
- Proper history
- Information regarding woman undergone abortion is a professional secret (doctor-patient relationship)
- Record general condition and local examination
- If seriously ill inform to police
- If death is imminent ,arrange for dying declaration or dying deposition
- Refuse to issue death certificate in case of death
 - **Should report to police**

EXAMINATION OF WOMEN IN CASE OF ABORTION

In Living:

In Dead:

Examine For Mechanical Violence

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- Any fluid should be removed by pipette to be examined for soap and chemicals, such as antiseptics.
- A swab should be taken for microbiological culture.
 - Clostridium welchii, hemolytic streptococci, anaerobic streptococci
- The pelvic organs should be removed en bloc

Air embolism

Amniotic fluid embolism

- In the lung capillaries, but rarely have been found in the systemic circulation, including embolization into the kidney, liver and brain.
- Amniotic fluid embolism is also one of the most potent causes of disseminated intravascular coagulopathy

**Condition In Which Medical Examination
For Abortion Is Required**