

Manual Vacuum Aspiration

What Is Manual Vacuum Aspiration (MVA)?

MVA is a procedure that empties the uterus (womb) of pregnancy tissue. It is an alternative to medication or to surgery (performed under general anaesthetic). It is performed in a hospital clinic room by a trained doctor. Pain relief is given and local anaesthetic is used to numb the neck of the womb (cervix). A small handheld device is then used to empty the contents of the uterus. The procedure is done while you are awake, so you are able to go home shortly after.

Who Is Suitable For MVA?

Anyone less than 12 weeks pregnant, who would prefer this option to medication or to surgery, under general anaesthetic.

Advantages:

- It does not require a general anaesthetic, so you will be able to resume normal duties later that day.
- It empties the womb quickly, allowing your body to recover and resume a normal menstrual cycle.
- You do not have to wait many hours for medication to work.
- You do not have to wait a long time for a date to come to hospital for surgery.

Disadvantages:

- You are awake and aware while the procedure is being performed.
- There is some pain during the procedure, similar to very strong period pain.
- For some women the procedure cannot be completed due to pain or discomfort.

Before Your Appointment:

When your appointment is booked, you will be asked to sign a consent form and will have some routine bloods taken. You should eat and drink normally on the day before you come for your appointment.

What Can You Expect On The Day?

The appointment involves a clinic visit of about two hours. However, the procedure itself takes about ten minutes from start to finish. When you arrive, the doctor will meet you and go through any questions that you may have. You will be given some medication to take an hour before your procedure. This includes painkillers, antibiotics and medication to relax the cervix (neck of the womb) to make the procedure easier. Before the procedure begins, you will receive a local anaesthetic injection to the cervix. The doctor will then gently open the cervix enough to pass a small suction tube into the womb. The contents of the womb will then be removed using a vacuum device. Period like pain, such as cramping will be experienced at this stage, which may be uncomfortable. An ultrasound scan machine may also be used during the procedure, to ensure the womb is empty.

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What Can I Expect After The Procedure?

After the procedure you can rest until you feel able to go home. If you are blood group Rhesus negative, you will receive an anti-D injection. You can go home unaccompanied and drive if you want to. Most women return to work the day after the procedure.

You will experience some cramping and period-like pain. If you need pain relief, take ibuprofen - 400mg every eight hours (maximum 1,200mg in 24 hours) or paracetamol 1,000mg every six hours (maximum 4,000mg in 24 hours). Both medications can be taken together, to provide more effective pain relief. Period-like bleeding will be present and will last about seven to ten days. Use sanitary towels (not tampons) and do not have sex until the bleeding has settled.

What Are The Risks Of MVA?

MVA is a very safe procedure, however every medical procedure has potential risks, these include:

- Feeling faint (1-2/100)
- Heavy bleeding requiring a blood transfusion (1/1000)
- Injury to neck of the womb/womb and need for further surgery (1-4/1000)
- Incomplete emptying of the womb which requires further treatment (3-4/100)
- Infection (1-3/100)

Advice On Where To Get Help:

If you have severe pain or heavy bleeding (soak through more than two maxi-size sanitary pads per hour, for more than two hours in a row), develop an unusual, unpleasant-smelling vaginal discharge, or a fever, or flu-like symptoms 24 hours after the procedure, please contact the Emergency Department in Cork University Maternity Hospital.

If you have any questions or worries, please contact **Cork University Maternity Hospital:**

Reception	(021) 4920500
Emergency Room	(021) 4920545
Early Pregnancy Unit	(021) 4927441
Bereavement & Loss Service	(021) 4920500
2 South Ward	(021) 4920628

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