

MYTHS	FACTS
Abortion causes infertility	This is untrue there is no evidence that a straightforward abortion causes infertility, miscarriage or stillbirths in future pregnancies.
People who have an abortion with have trauma and mental health problems afterwards	This is very rare. Most women having an abortion are normally relieved and believe they made the right decision for them.
Abortion causes breast cancer	The largest study looking at a possible link between abortion and breast cancer followed 1.5 million women in Denmark. It found that women who had abortions had no greater risk of breast cancer than those who had not. Research showing a link between breast cancer and abortion has been discredited. A collaborative analysis of data from 53 studies reported in the Lancet stated that “worldwide epidemiological evidence indicates that pregnancies ending as either spontaneous or induced abortions do not have adverse effects on women’s subsequent risk of developing breast cancer.” Source: The Care of Women Requesting Induced Abortion, RCOG, 2000
There will be physical complications if someone has an abortion	Pregnancy is not without physical risk: carrying a pregnancy to term and giving birth can cause complications and subsequent health problems or even death. Even if a woman is in good physical health continuing a pregnancy is more risky than an abortion. Complications after an abortion such as serious bleeding, internal damage to the uterus or cervix and infection are possible but very rare when, as in the UK, abortions are performed by trained, experienced professionals in sterile conditions.
A woman’s partner has to give consent to an abortion	Not true. In a few cases men have taken their partner to court to try to prevent her having an abortion. All of these cases have failed. Judges have stressed that a man does not have the right either to stop his partner having an abortion or force her to have one.
The foetus has legal rights	No. Legal rights are granted at birth, when the mother and the baby are clearly separated and protecting the rights of the baby would not limit the rights of the woman.
Women have abortions instead of using contraception	There is no evidence to support the assertion that women are careless about using contraception because abortion is available. Unplanned pregnancy is a distressing situation for any woman and choosing to have an abortion can be a difficult decision. The use of contraception is continuously rising but no method is 100 per cent effective. People’s sex lives are often unpredictable so contraception may not always be used as effectively or regularly as it might be.