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.¹²³⁴

- Women who recognize their pregnancy late are more likely to need second-trimester abortion.²⁶

- 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 women 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

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


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

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