

My name is Elizabeth Gillette. In January of 2011, I became pregnant. My then boyfriend insisted that I make an appointment at an abortion clinic near our home. I resisted, only making the appointment when he assured me that I could leave the appointment at any time if I decided against the procedure. When we arrived at the clinic, he paid roughly \$800 in cash for the procedure. I asked the receptionist if we could have a refund if I changed my mind. She at first said no, but then said we could have a partial refund for the services we did not receive, but would still have to pay for the office visit, the ultrasound etc.

Upon entering the examination room, the doctor entered and began an internal ultrasound. I asked if I could see my baby. She at first said no, it was not policy to show women their ultrasound images. But after I insisted, she turned the ultrasound monitor around. The wand was moving but the picture on the monitor was not because she had taken a still image of my baby, rather than showing me the actual ultrasound images. She then said that my pregnancy was not viable because there was no heartbeat. The heartbeat was not visible on the screen because she had taken a still image.

I was then told that I would need to take two medications, one in the presence of the doctor, and one at home. I wondered what the second medication was for, as no one told me. I could not take the medication because I was still very unsure and very pressured by both doctor and my boyfriend. I did not receive any options counseling, a waiting period or any other help with making my decision. The doctor became frustrated and took me to her office, saying she had other patients waiting for her. I waited and suffered without taking the medication for nearly an hour, struggling with the decision that weighed heavy on me. The decision felt impossible, extremely pressured and forced.

I finally took the first medication in order to leave the office. As soon as I took the medication, I felt as though a part of me had died. I left the office and went home where the rest of the abortion took place. I was given no follow up treatment, counseling, appointments or care.

I took the second pill at home the next day. The cramping and the bleeding was far worse than I had imagined. There was so much pain and blood that I thought I might die. I locked myself in the bathroom and stayed on the toilet for over an hour as blood poured out. I wondered if I would bleed to death on the bathroom floor. The cramping was intolerable. I tried hot pads and pain-relieving medication but nothing relieved the severe pain.

But the worst part was when I passed the gestational sac. The gestational sac came out whole, and I realized immediately what it was because it was unlike the blood clots that I had already passed. It was transparent yellow, about the size and shape of a tennis ball. When I picked it up, I could see the baby inside. He looked like a little gummy bear. I sat and held him and cried. Then I flushed my baby down the toilet.

The bleeding continued even after I passed the fetus. And when I took the antibiotics the clinic had given me, they made me vomit severely. No one from Planned Parenthood ever called to make sure I was okay, and I was not offered a follow-up visit.

After the abortion was over, I felt overwhelming guilt that wouldn't go away. I began having nightmares and became depressed. I struggled with anorexia and a series of failed and abusive relationships. I was later diagnosed with post-traumatic stress disorder. A counselor helped me trace the source of my PTSD

to the abortion. Although I've had several traumatic experiences since the abortion, that was the moment when my life began to fall apart.

Counseling helped me to deal with my PTSD, to come to terms with my abortion, and to move past my abusive relationships. I'm now happily married and the mother of 4 living children.

The abortion pill, or the chemical abortion procedure, is risky and can cause severe and dangerous side effects, as it did for me. With a chemical abortion, women leave the clinic and pass the fetus alone, without the care of a doctor or nurse to help them if they have complications. My heart breaks for the women who would experience this as I did. Pill only abortions are touted as safe and easy, completed in the comfort of your own home. Tragically, this was the opposite of what I experienced. Women deserve to be protected from these harmful effects. On demand abortions is not putting the safety of the woman as the highest priority. Because chemical abortion is a procedure that encompasses many risks, both physical and emotional, it should not be thought of as a routine procedure. We need to protect the health of women. It is my deepest hope that no woman would have to suffer as I did.