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First-Trimester Surgical Abortion Technique

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KEYWORDS

- First-trimester abortion • Surgical abortion • Electric vacuum aspiration
- Manual vacuum aspiration

KEY POINTS

- First-trimester aspiration abortion is a safe and common procedure that usually occurs in an outpatient setting.
- Complication rates increase gradually with gestational age.
- Postabortal infection prophylaxis should be given before the procedure, not afterward.
- Cervical preparation with misoprostol or osmotic dilators is recommended after 12 weeks' gestation and in adolescents.
- Manual vacuum aspiration is as effective as electric vacuum aspiration.

INTRODUCTION

Abortion is a safe, common procedure in the United States, with 1.21 million abortions performed in 2008 resulting in less than 0.3% of patients hospitalized with complica-