

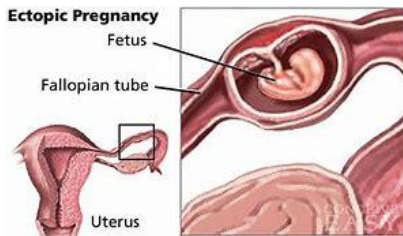


Christian Voices for Life  
Weekly Pro-Life  
Education  
Prayer  
Action

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## What about Ectopic Pregnancy?

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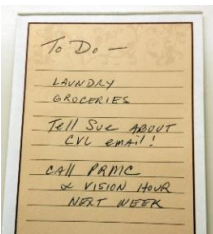
**Education:** An ectopic pregnancy is a pregnancy where the child is developing outside the uterus. The most common location for the child is in the fallopian tube, where fertilization normally takes place. It can be caused by damage to the fallopian tube from injury, infection or surgery, or scar tissue in the uterus, possibly from a previous abortion. The embryo is able to implant, and a placenta forms, to allow the baby to obtain nutrition from mom and grow. The size of the fallopian tube is limited

however, and at 6 to 8 weeks gestation, the tube will burst. The bursting of the tube is a life-threatening event for the mother, and we currently have no technology capable of re-implanting the child in the uterus or in any way to help him or her to survive. The appropriate intervention, therefore, is to remove the section of the tube where the child is located. Although ectopic pregnancy has been cited as an example of when an abortion is necessary to save the mother, removal of an ectopic pregnancy is NOT abortion. Elective abortion is a deliberate action to kill the developing child and remove it from the womb. When an ectopic pregnancy is removed, the intent of the surgery is not to kill the child, and the child is not actively killed. We simply do not have the technology necessary to keep such a child alive. This action is almost universally accepted as moral, under the principal of double effect, since the good effect is intended and the bad effect merely foreseen.

If an ectopic pregnancy is detected early enough, an alternative treatment would be to end the pregnancy by administering injections of methotrexate, which would be a deliberate act to kill the child. However it could also be viewed that the purpose is to prevent the damage to the mother's body, while the death of the embryo is foreseen, but not directly intended. Theologians disagree on the morality of this treatment. The fact remains, however, that administration of methotrexate would be a deliberate act to kill a living embryo.



**Prayer:** Please, Lord, have mercy on women who have ectopic pregnancies, as well as those who have suffered from multiple miscarriages. It is difficult for us to understand Your purpose when You create children who will not survive to be born. Help the mothers and fathers who grieve for their children who lived only in the womb to trust in You and accept Your will. Give them hope that they will in the future be able to accept a child into their family whether through birth or adoption. Help them to look forward to the day when they will be able to meet and enjoy the company of their children in heaven.



**Action:** Some people may claim that abortion should be legal because ectopic pregnancies and other situations may make it necessary to abort a child in order to save a mother, or that it would put women at risk for being charged with an illegal abortion when they miscarry. If you hear such an argument, politely but firmly correct them. Explain that the removal of an ectopic pregnancy may in fact be necessary, but it is not an abortion. The purpose of an abortion is to kill the child, and it is never necessary to do that. If late pregnancy complications threaten the mother, the baby may need to be delivered, and may

not survive, but it is never necessary to deliberately kill the child. Also, never in the history of illegal abortion was any woman ever charged. It is the doctors who are held accountable, not the woman. The 2019 Alabama law specifically allows treatment of an ectopic pregnancy and states "No woman upon whom an abortion is performed or attempted to be performed shall be criminally or civilly liable. Furthermore, no physician confirming the serious health risk to the child's mother shall be criminally or civilly liable for those actions." <https://www.al.com/news/2019/05/alabama-abortion-ban-passes-read-the-bill.html>