

PRESS RELEASE

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The Veil law has made it possible to legalize voluntary interruption of pregnancy in order to respond to the distress of some women while significantly reducing the disastrous effects of clandestine abortions.

The 12-week period of amenorrhea was increased in 2001 to 14 weeks to limit the number of women forced to travel abroad to have their pregnancy terminated.

Increasing this time to 16 weeks of amenorrhea increases the use of surgical manoeuvres that may be dangerous to women and to a greater cervical dilation that can lead to long-term complications such as preterm birth.

These remarks lead the French National Academy of Medicine to consider that:

- the extension of the period to 16 weeks of amenorrhea does not meet any legitimate request from women who on the contrary hope for faster care, with the risk of increasing the time limit to their approach,
- this lengthening will inevitably lead to a significant increase in short or long term complications.

As a result, the National Academy of Medicine recommends:

- to maintain the legal deadline for a voluntary termination of pregnancy at 14 weeks of amenorrhea,
- to increase the vigilance and resources of health authorities to optimise the functioning of health centres that take care of the voluntary terminations of pregnancies by making them more accessible and within a shorter time frame,
- advises against transferring skills to midwives for the practice of voluntary terminations of surgical pregnancies at any term given their current lack of surgical qualifications.