

When I was twenty my mum and dad surprised us all that they were expecting a child. It came as a huge shock to us because I have an older brother who was 21 at the time and a younger sister at the time would have been 14. My mum went to the doctor as normally expected to do during a pregnancy. She was 40 years old and she was treated very different to her previous pregnancies. They were very insistent because of my mother's age that she should undergo various tests etc (including, Amniocentesis, Chorionic villus sampling).

From just doing a quick internet search on this topic I can across a website it says the following:

There is some risk of miscarriage, and this is one of the aspects to think about when you're considering whether to have the test. Sadly, between one and two in every 100 women experience a [miscarriage](#). There is another genetic test that's done later in pregnancy, called amniocentesis. The miscarriage risk is slightly lower with this amniocentesis than with CVS. About one in every 100 women has a miscarriage as a direct result of amniocentesis. This test isn't offered before 15 weeks of pregnancy.

If the CVS test does show a problem, you'll be able to discuss the result with a specialist. This will prepare you to make a decision about whether or not you want to go ahead with the pregnancy. Whatever your decision, you'll be fully supported by the midwives and specialists involved.

<http://www.babycenter.com.au/a328/chorionic-villus-sampling-cvs#ixzz4Bhvo2naF>

She was very upset and after doing research in regards to these tests we discovered that there was actually a higher chance of having a miscarriage because of the tests than there was a chance there was something wrong with the baby. My mum really had to challenge the doctor on this (which I think is unacceptable). My mum's choice as a woman was to continue as normal with the pregnancy and if the baby had any medical issues, they would rather keep the baby than have an abortion. It is important to note that my mum had previously no medical conditions, no problems with the previous births and had three normal pregnancies and three healthy babies. My baby brother (who brought so much love and happiness into our family) was completely healthy.

This has a lot to do with the abortion reforms. They insist that it is the woman's right to choose. The pressure that my mum felt to have those tests was so terrible. There was an expectation that if there was something wrong with the baby then the best option is abortion. That is not choice.

The idea that a person that is disabled is better off aborted before they are born or two weeks after birth is completely unacceptable. What are we saying as a society that a disabled life isn't worth living that they can't contribute to society; that they have no worth and value as a person; that they are a drain on society. My fear is that if these reforms go ahead will this pressure and expectation increase. Will other women in a similar situation feel like it is expected that they must kill their baby if there is something wrong with it.

On a similar point I have been reading about the Sarah Milosevic case. Her baby died just before she was due to give birth due to a car accident. The driver at fault was fined and lost their licence for five months. There has been community outrage in regards to this case. A petition with 113 000 signatures was given to the attorney general this year to make the penalties tougher for those that kill unborn children. This is very significant because it highlights what the community thinks in regard to life and the protection of life. When a baby is in the womb it is a life and should and needs to be protected. It is a double standard if a baby is only a life when it is wanted and if it is unwanted it is a problem that needs to be terminated.

I have had friends that have had abortions. They were severely impacted emotionally from the abortion. I found it distressing that in Victoria no pre counselling is required. Is this the sort of legislation we want in Queensland, I think not. **Susanne Babbel Ph.D., M.F.T wrote an article in Psychology Today about Post Abortion Stress Syndrome** (<https://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/somatic-psychology/201010/post-abortion-stress-syndrome-pass-does-it-exist>)

Symptoms of PASS may include any of the following:

1. **Guilt:** Experiencing guilt does not imply that you made a mistake or "violated your own moral code," as some pro-lifers would imply. However, feelings around having an abortion may be complex and have to take into account fear of what others might think.



2. **Anxiety:** General anxiety is a common symptom of PTSD—in the case of PASS, there might be a particular anxiety over fertility issues and the ability to get pregnant again.
3. **Numbness, Depression:** Again, common symptoms of PTSD.
4. **Flashbacks:** Abortion is surgery, and in most cases, it's surgery that happens while the patient is fully conscious. This can be a distressing experience.
5. **Suicidal thoughts:** In extreme cases, the PTSD that results from a controversial abortion could lead to suicidal thoughts or tendencies and would require immediate treatment. It's important to note that this is not a common or expected symptom of PASS, but as with any form of PTSD, it is possible.

It is so clear from the above description of Post Abortion Stress Syndrome that abortion is not the best option for a woman. The Victoria laws are to my knowledge the worst in the country. After 24 weeks a woman is able to have an abortion. This type of law has no place in Queensland. The Queensland community and I, myself, want to see life valued, protected and cherished from conception.

Written by Sarah Hockley

