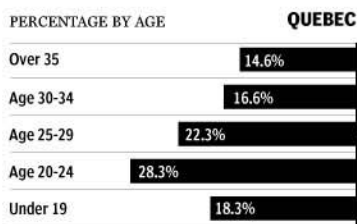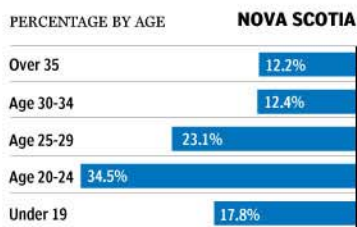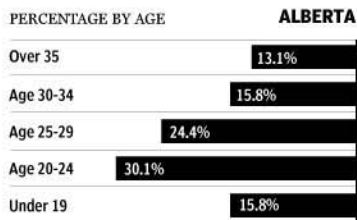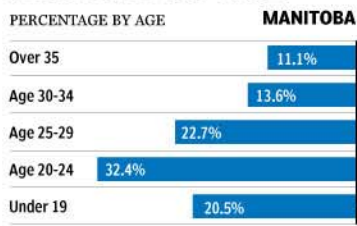# ABORTION & CANADA

*The National Post breaks down the most recent complete numbers from the Canadian Institute for Health Information on abortion in Canada, gathered from provincial and territorial ministries of health, hospitals and independent abortion clinics (it doesn't include fee-for-service abortion data because it's of varying quality). While data from hospitals and clinics alone underestimates the number of abortions performed in Canada annually, for now it's the best way to produce comparable Canadian data. Below is a look at the 93,755 induced abortions reported in 2009 (the most recent year for which data were available).*
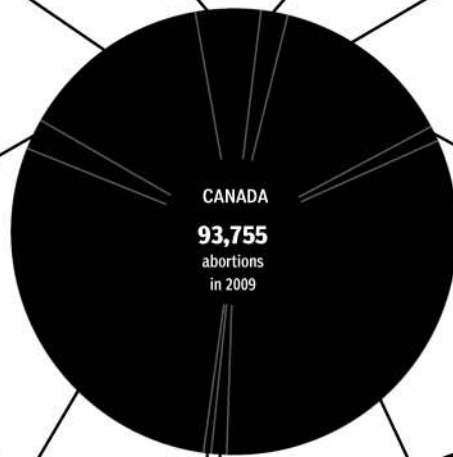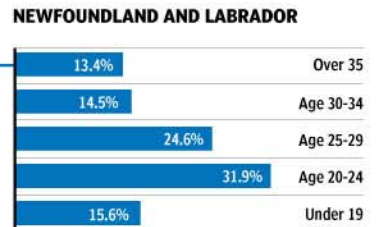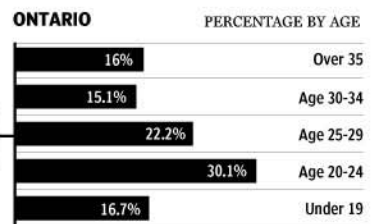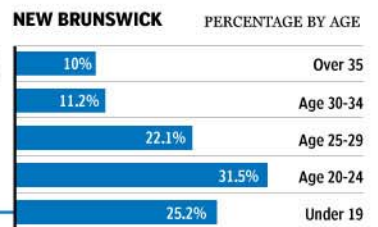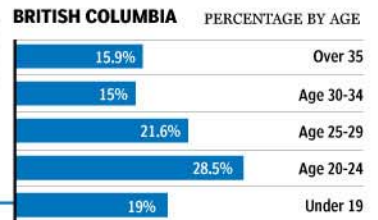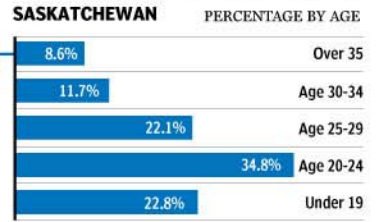
## INDUCED ABORTIONS REPORTED BY HOSPITALS AND CLINICS IN CANADA IN 2009 BY PROVINCE
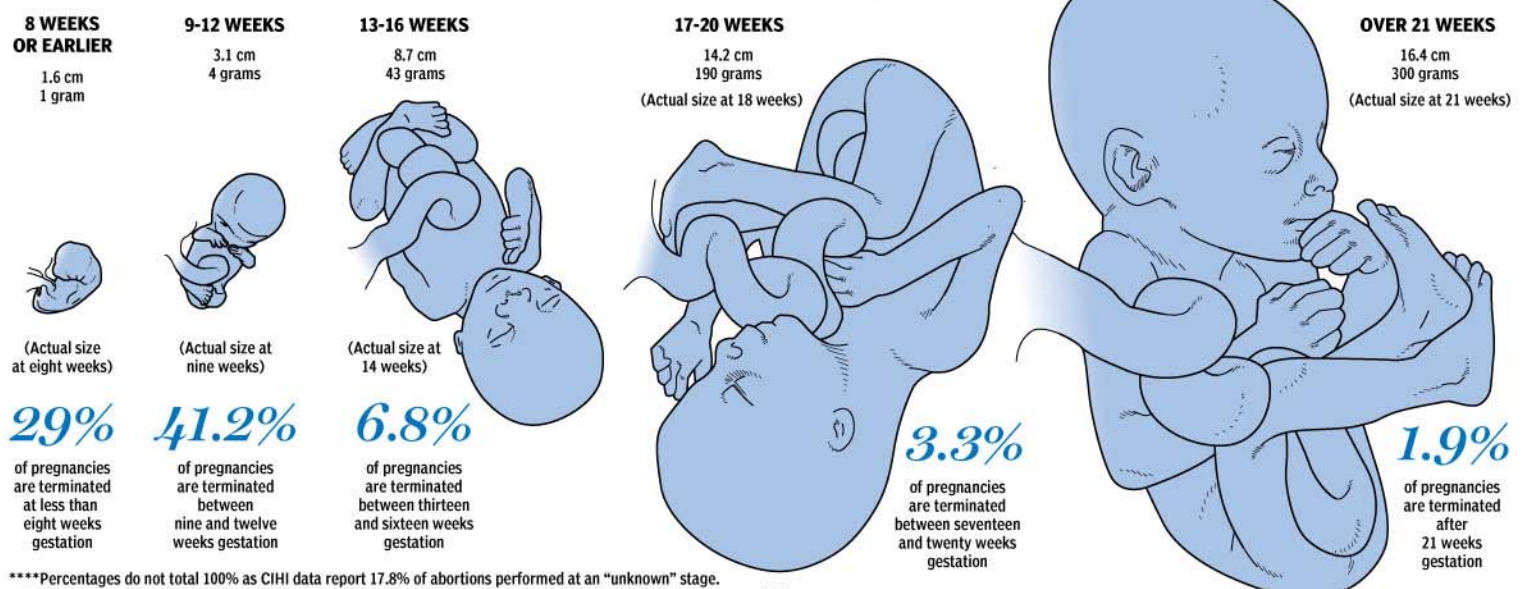
HOSPITALS & CLINICS ■ (black)   *HOSPITALS ONLY ■ (blue)
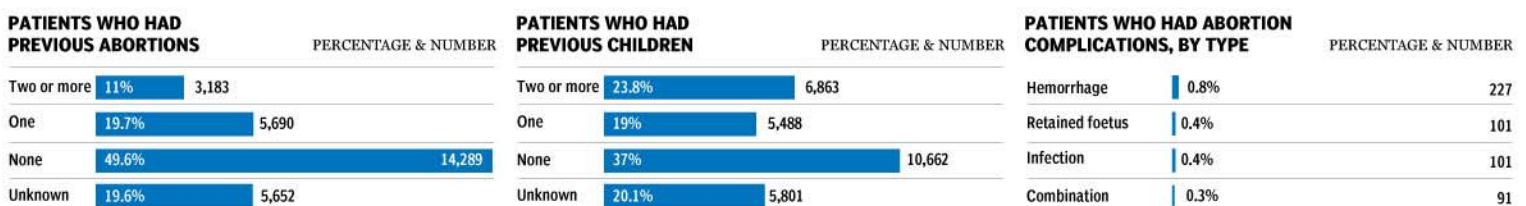*For some provinces total induced abortion data from clinics was not broken down by age group.
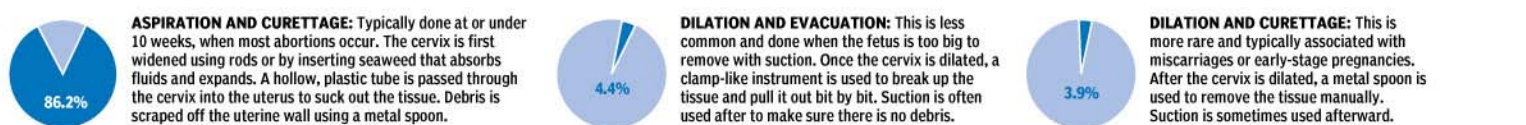
**CANADA — 93,755 abortions in 2009**

### ABORTION BY PROVINCE

**MANITOBA** — 4,247 / 2,778
PERCENTAGE BY AGE

| Age | % |
|---|---|
| Over 35 | 11.1% |
| Age 30-34 | 13.6% |
| Age 25-29 | 22.7% |
| Age 20-24 | 32.4% |
| Under 19 | 20.5% |

**ALBERTA** — 13,150
PERCENTAGE BY AGE

| Age | % |
|---|---|
| Over 35 | 13.1% |
| Age 30-34 | 15.8% |
| Age 25-29 | 24.4% |
| Age 20-24 | 30.1% |
| Under 19 | 15.8% |

**NOVA SCOTIA** — 2,119
PERCENTAGE BY AGE

| Age | % |
|---|---|
| Over 35 | 12.2% |
| Age 30-34 | 12.4% |
| Age 25-29 | 23.1% |
| Age 20-24 | 34.5% |
| Under 19 | 17.8% |

**QUEBEC** — 27,139
PERCENTAGE BY AGE

| Age | % |
|---|---|
| Over 35 | 14.6% |
| Age 30-34 | 16.6% |
| Age 25-29 | 22.3% |
| Age 20-24 | 28.3% |
| Under 19 | 18.3% |

**YUKON, NUNAVUT AND N.W.T.** — 296
(YUKON NUNAVUT & N.W.T.)

| Age | % |
|---|---|
| Over 35 | 7.9% |
| Age 30-34 | 11% |
| Age 25-29 | 25% |
| Age 20-24 | 34.9% |
| Under 19 | 21.2% |

**SASKATCHEWAN** — 2,019
PERCENTAGE BY AGE

| % | Age |
|---|---|
| 8.6% | Over 35 |
| 11.7% | Age 30-34 |
| 22.1% | Age 25-29 |
| 34.8% | Age 20-24 |
| 22.8% | Under 19 |

**BRITISH COLUMBIA**** — 12,461 / 5,104
PERCENTAGE BY AGE

| % | Age |
|---|---|
| 15.9% | Over 35 |
| 15% | Age 30-34 |
| 21.6% | Age 25-29 |
| 28.5% | Age 20-24 |
| 19% | Under 19 |

**Clinic data is incomplete

**NEW BRUNSWICK** — 1,104 / 489
PERCENTAGE BY AGE

| % | Age |
|---|---|
| 10% | Over 35 |
| 11.2% | Age 30-34 |
| 22.1% | Age 25-29 |
| 31.5% | Age 20-24 |
| 25.2% | Under 19 |

**ONTARIO** — 30,268
PERCENTAGE BY AGE

| % | Age |
|---|---|
| 16% | Over 35 |
| 15.1% | Age 30-34 |
| 22.2% | Age 25-29 |
| 30.1% | Age 20-24 |
| 16.7% | Under 19 |

**PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND*** — 76
***Induced abortions are not performed on P.E.I. The number above refers to induced abortions performed on P.E.I. patients in another province or territory.

**NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR** — 956
PERCENTAGE BY AGE

| % | Age |
|---|---|
| 13.4% | Over 35 |
| 14.5% | Age 30-34 |
| 24.6% | Age 25-29 |
| 31.9% | Age 20-24 |
| 15.6% | Under 19 |

## AGE OF FETUS IN INDUCED ABORTIONS REPORTED BY HOSPITALS IN CANADA (EXCLUDING QUEBEC)****



**8 WEEKS OR EARLIER**
1.6 cm
1 gram
(Actual size at eight weeks)
**29%** of pregnancies are terminated at less than eight weeks gestation

**9-12 WEEKS**
3.1 cm
4 grams
(Actual size at nine weeks)
**41.2%** of pregnancies are terminated between nine and twelve weeks gestation

**13-16 WEEKS**
8.7 cm
43 grams
(Actual size at 14 weeks)
**6.8%** of pregnancies are terminated between thirteen and sixteen weeks gestation

**17-20 WEEKS**
14.2 cm
190 grams
(Actual size at 18 weeks)
**3.3%** of pregnancies are terminated between seventeen and twenty weeks gestation

**OVER 21 WEEKS**
16.4 cm
300 grams
(Actual size at 21 weeks)
**1.9%** of pregnancies are terminated after 21 weeks gestation

****Percentages do not total 100% as CIHI data report 17.8% of abortions performed at an "unknown" stage.
NOTE: Total abortions in hospitals is 28,814 - Quebec data is not included because data on gestational age is not available.

## STATISTICS ON CANADIAN WOMEN WHO HAVE HAD ABORTIONS

**PATIENTS WHO HAD PREVIOUS ABORTIONS** — PERCENTAGE & NUMBER

| | % | Number |
|---|---|---|
| Two or more | 11% | 3,183 |
| One | 19.7% | 5,690 |
| None | 49.6% | 14,289 |
| Unknown | 19.6% | 5,652 |

**PATIENTS WHO HAD PREVIOUS CHILDREN** — PERCENTAGE & NUMBER

| | % | Number |
|---|---|---|
| Two or more | 23.8% | 6,863 |
| One | 19% | 5,488 |
| None | 37% | 10,662 |
| Unknown | 20.1% | 5,801 |

**PATIENTS WHO HAD ABORTION COMPLICATIONS, BY TYPE** — PERCENTAGE & NUMBER

| | % | Number |
|---|---|---|
| Hemorrhage | 0.8% | 227 |
| Retained foetus | 0.4% | 101 |
| Infection | 0.4% | 101 |
| Combination | 0.3% | 91 |

## MOST COMMON METHODS OF INDUCED ABORTION IN CANADA

**86.2% — ASPIRATION AND CURETTAGE:** Typically done at or under 10 weeks, when most abortions occur. The cervix is first widened using rods or by inserting seaweed that absorbs fluids and expands. A hollow, plastic tube is passed through the cervix into the uterus to suck out the tissue. Debris is scraped off the uterine wall using a metal spoon.

**4.4% — DILATION AND EVACUATION:** This is less common and done when the fetus is too big to remove with suction. Once the cervix is dilated, a clamp-like instrument is used to break up the tissue and pull it out bit by bit. Suction is often used after to make sure there is no debris.

**3.9% — DILATION AND CURETTAGE:** This is more rare and typically associated with miscarriages or early-stage pregnancies. After the cervix is dilated, a metal spoon is used to remove the tissue manually. Suction is sometimes used afterward.

NOTE: Induced abortion is defined as the medical termination of pregnancy. Equivalent terms include artificial abortion, therapeutic abortion, voluntary termination of pregnancy, elective termination of pregnancy and active termination of pregnancy.