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Abortion in the United States: Incidence and Access to Services, 2005

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CONTEXT: Accurate information about abortion incidence and services is necessary to monitor levels of unwanted pregnancy and women's ability to access abortion services.

METHODS: All known abortion providers in the United States were contacted for information about abortion services in 2004 and 2005. This information, along with data from the U.S. Census Bureau, was used to examine national and state trends in numbers of abortions and abortion rates, proportions of counties and metropolitan areas without an abortion provider, and accessibility of abortion services.

RESULTS: An estimated 1.2 million abortions were performed in the United States in 2005, 8% fewer than in 2000. The abortion rate in 2005 was 19.4 per 1,000 women aged 15–44; this rate represents a 9% decline from 2000. There were 1,787 abortion providers in 2005, only 2% fewer than in 2000. Some 87% of U.S. counties, containing 35% of women aged 15–44, did not have an abortion provider in 2005. Early medication abortion, offered by an estimated 57% of known providers, accounted for 13% of abortions (and for 22% of abortions before nine weeks' gestation). The average amount paid for an abortion at 10 weeks was \$413—after adjustment for inflation, \$11 less than in 2001.

CONCLUSION: The numbers of abortions and the abortion rate continued their long-term decline through 2005. Reasons for this trend are unknown but may include improved access to and use of contraceptives or decreased access to abortion services.

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» [table of contents](#)

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