

Incidence rate of abortions reduced during COVID-19 pandemic, according to study

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The incidence rate of abortions decreased during the COVID-19 pandemic, mainly driven by procedural abortions, according to a study published online Oct. 24 in the *Annals of Internal Medicine*.

Catherine S. Hwang, M.D., from Brigham and Women's Hospital and Harvard Medical School in Boston, and colleagues estimated changes in

the incidence rate of induced medical and procedural abortions in a cross-sectional study involving reproductive-aged commercially insured [women](#) in the United States. The monthly age-adjusted incidence rates were measured among women aged 15 to 44 years from January 2018 to June 2022.

The researchers found that the estimated age-adjusted monthly incidence rate of abortions was 151 per million women in January 2018, with equal rates of medical and procedural abortions. An immediate 14% decrease was seen in the monthly incidence rate of abortions after March 2020 (21 per million women), driven by a 31% decline in procedural abortions (22 per million women). Of the medical abortions, fewer than 4% each month were administered by telehealth.

"Our findings suggest that expanded commercial insurance coverage for telehealth abortions could provide an important opportunity to expand access to abortion care, particularly as some states restrict the delivery of [abortion](#) services," the authors write.

More information: Catherine S. Hwang et al, Changes in Induced Medical and Procedural Abortion Rates in a Commercially Insured Population, 2018 to 2022, *Annals of Internal Medicine* (2023). [DOI: 10.7326/M23-1609](#)

Jennifer L. Michener et al, Abortion Trends Amid Restrictions in a Commercially Insured U.S. Population: An Opportunity for Internal Medicine Physicians, *Annals of Internal Medicine* (2023). [DOI: 10.7326/M23-2582](#)

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