

Abortion

Abortion is the medical termination of a pregnancy.

It is legal in the UK up to 24 weeks of pregnancy, if it is needed to prevent damage to the mother's physical or mental health. It can be done after 24 weeks if there is a serious threat to the mother's life or the child's quality of life.



Pro-Life viewpoints - Belief in the sanctity of life, belief that life begins at conception so abortion is murder, belief that all life is valuable, belief that if it would be difficult to raise a child there are other options, such as adoption or asking for help from government e.g. benefits.

Pro-Choice viewpoints - Belief that we should consider if the child/mother will have a quality of life, belief that life does not start at conception, belief that in extreme cases abortion should be allowed e.g. in the case of rape

Euthanasia

Euthanasia - The act of bringing about an easy and painless death.

Usually seen as a release for people suffering with degenerative or terminal illnesses



For	Against
It's not nice to see others suffering, it is the most loving thing to allow someone to die if they're in pain.	The sanctity of life still applies so euthanasia is murder
We should be allowed a choice over how we die	What if people try to manipulate someone into asking for euthanasia in order to get inheritance quicker?
When animals are suffering we carry out euthanasia so why can't humans do the same for themselves?	What if people use it as an excuse for murder?

Y9 - MEDICAL ETHICS

Keywords

Sanctity of Life	Religious belief that all life is sacred and special because it was made by God
Quality of Life	How happy, comfortable and healthy someone is. You can have a good or bad quality of life.
Pro-Life	Opposing abortion and euthanasia
Pro-Choice	Supporting the right of a woman to choose whether or not she has an abortion
Fertility treatment	Medical procedure to assist an infertile couple to have a child
In vitro fertilisation (IVF)	Conception occurs via sperm and egg being placed into a test tube
Artificial insemination	Sperm medically inserted into a woman to assist pregnancy
Human genetic engineering	The modification of genes to change the features of a human
Designer babies	Babies with gender and characteristics chosen by their parents, which is currently illegal

Drugs

Drugs may be legal or illegal and can have various effects on the body. Taking an overdose of drugs can lead to death. For this reason, some drugs are illegal if thought to be too dangerous. Some people think the way to stop this harm is to legalise drugs.

Legalise - We would know what was in drugs and be given guidance on how much is safe to take, reducing deaths by accidental overdose.

Keep drugs illegal - They are dangerous and should not be made more accessible

We should focus on education as a way of reducing deaths

Conflicts of Interest

A conflict of interest is when two people/groups have a disagreement about what the best thing to do in a situation is.

There have been a number of cases involving conflicts of interest in medicine, often involving children such as Charlie Gard or Alfie Evans. Some people feel that doctors should have the final say in medical decisions because they are the experts, others feel that it is the parents' right to make medical decisions for their own children, as they would any other decision.

Contraception

Contraception stops a woman becoming pregnant. It can be temporary (e.g. condom) or permanent (e.g. hysterectomy - removing the uterus).

You can get free access to contraception at sexual health centres. However, some question whether everyone should have access to it, e.g. those under the age of consent (16).

There are different religious views on using contraception - e.g. some Christians believe they should not use it and follow God's plan, but others believe it is more loving not to bring a child into an environment where they may not be looked after.

Fertility Treatment

Artificial Insemination and In Vitro Fertilisation are processes that an individual or a couple may take if they are struggling to conceive a child. They vary between injecting sperm directly into the uterus to mixing the sperm and egg outside of the body.

Different views on fertility treatment

Allows people to have children, this is considered a gift

Christians follow the Bible command "Be fruitful and multiply" which means they should have children

There are plenty of children who need adopting - why not adopt rather than create more children?

Spare fertilised eggs used in fertility treatments are sometimes destroyed, and this may be viewed as murder by some.

Genetic Engineering

Pros	Cons
Less risk of genetic diseases	More risk of making mistakes
Medical conditions will not be passed down	Gap in society (only rich people could afford designer babies)
Child will be smarter, stronger and better looking (designer babies)	Less individuality in the world - everyone would be the same and this would be boring!
Increased life span	Could create bias for genetically modified individuals so that they have more opportunities than others, e.g. better job opportunities
Child can have genes that the parents do not carry	Interferes with what God had planned
Future generations can be prevented from getting poor genes	Changing one gene could influence another and have a bad consequence