

What is J. Rophe Medical, and what are they all about? As the director, let me tell you.

First of all, we are a state licensed medical office providing no cost pregnancy testing and ultrasounds. Our medical staff consists of a physician, who serves as our Medical Director, and 5 Registered Nurses. We are also faith-based, similar to St. Joseph's Hospital, and do not refer for or offer abortions.

Some people have called us anti-choice, which couldn't be further from the truth. We give the patient all the information she needs to make an *informed* choice, which every woman deserves.

All our services are free and confidential. We don't receive any government funding but are 100% community supported and most of our medical staff volunteers their time because they are sold out to the philosophy of the organization.

Usually, when a woman calls for an appointment, we are able to get her in within a day or two. If the pregnancy test is positive, we give her a Positive Pregnancy Test Verification to use at her discretion. Then we talk about her options – all of her options; abortion, parenting and adoption.

If she is at least 7 weeks along, we offer a free ultrasound. The ultrasound is vital, as it will give her information she will need to make an *informed* choice.

At 7 weeks, we expect to see an intrauterine pregnancy with cardiac activity. Otherwise, miscarriage or ectopic precautions are given. A significant number of early pregnancies end in miscarriage naturally, so if she is considering abortion, this could be a relief as it takes the decision out of her hands.

We also measure the embryo to determine how far along she is and give her an estimated due date.

Often times, the patient has no idea how far along she is. We had one gal who thought she was 6 or 7 weeks. She said she needed to get an abortion and her boyfriend agreed. They were both college students. She wanted an ultrasound to find out how far along she was and she ended up being 15 weeks along! Once they saw their fully formed baby, they decided to go forward with the pregnancy.

During the ultrasound, we show the patient everything we are seeing and allow their partners or friends to join them. We do not withhold information; for we

cannot do anything against the truth, but only for the truth. We see this as an opportunity to educate. We have provided over 2100 ultrasounds in the past 4 years. Yes, we expect to see a heartbeat at 7 weeks. Yes, there are arms and legs, fingers and toes at 12 weeks and the baby jumps, stretches, and waves its arms.

If the patient chooses abortion, we keep the door open. We follow-up to check in and see how she is doing. If she is having trouble with that decision, and needs someone to talk to, we are there for her. Many of us, myself included, have had abortions and understand the regret and heartache that may be associated with that decision – even if it was 40 years ago. Some women find it hard to forgive themselves. Trust me, it's possible.

Now you know a little more about J. Rophe Medical. Thank you for listening. This is Cindy Broese Van Groenou for Community Comments.