

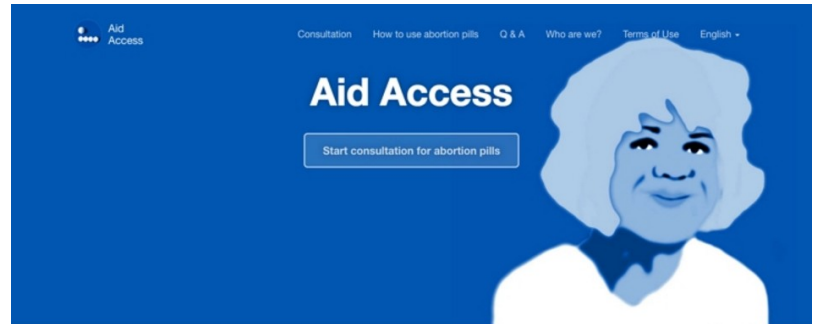


Written by [Warren Mass](#) on November 12, 2018

# FDA Taking Close Look at Online Abortion Pill Vendor “Aid Access”

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) issued a statement that it is taking “very seriously” claims that the abortion inducing drug mifepristone is being sold online to U.S. customers and is “evaluating the allegations to assess potential violations of U.S. law.”

A search for buying abortion pills online produces several sources, but the provider receiving the most attention is Aid Access, a European website that writes prescriptions for the two abortion-inducing drugs, misoprostol and mifepristone, which are filled at a pharmacy in India that mails the drugs to women in the United States.



## For a safe abortion with pills

For many women, girls and trans men it is very difficult to access abortion care because of the cost of abortion, mandatory 24-72 hour waiting periods, the requirement of parental consent for minors, or the fact that clinics have been forced to close completely. Privacy concerns, abusive relationships, and other challenges can also make it impossible to secure a safe abortion. Aid Access supports women who cannot otherwise access an abortion and protects

Aid Access, which has been online for about six months, was founded by Dutch physician Rebecca Gomperts, who also founded Women on Web, a similar website that ships abortion drugs to women in countries where abortion is illegal. Gomperts told *The Atlantic* that she fills each Aid Access customer’s prescription for misoprostol and mifepristone herself and sends them to the Indian pharmacy.

In a statement made on October 21, the FDA defended its strict distribution restrictions, calling them “necessary to ensure the safe use of mifepristone for termination of pregnancy.”

“Mifeprex is only available to be dispensed in certain health care settings, specifically, clinics, medical offices and hospitals, by or under the supervision of a certified prescriber,” the agency said. “Mifepristone, including Mifeprex, for termination of pregnancy is not legally available over the Internet.”

The FDA has posted a warning on its website that makes its position on such online purchases very clear:

You should not buy Mifeprex [mifepristone] over the Internet because you will bypass important safeguards designed to protect your health (and the health of others).

Mifeprex has special safety restrictions on how it is distributed to the public....

The operations of Gomperts came under fire from pro-life groups, whose condemnations went beyond the moral and ethical problems with abortion.

Catherine Glenn Foster, president and CEO of Americans United for Life, told CNN that the service of Aid Access was “reckless and irresponsible,” since women cannot be screened online for an ectopic pregnancy, “a dangerous and potentially life-threatening condition that no abortion clinic would try to manage.”

“Because Gomperts’ plan is dangerous to women’s health and safety, the act of sending unregulated prescription abortion pills through the mail should be the subject of federal regulation,” Foster said.



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*Image: screenshot from [aidaccess.org](http://aidaccess.org)*

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