



Holly Patterson, age 18, died September 17, 2003, from sepsis caused by a fetus incompletely expelled in a safe and legal medical abortion. Holly got the drugs for the fatal abortion at a Planned Parenthood in Hayward, California, on September 10.

Rather than follow the recommended protocols for chemical abortions, Planned Parenthood followed the more popular American approach of giving Holly the mifepristone at the facility, then giving her misoprostol to self-administer at home.

At the clinic, Holly was administered an alternative/unapproved regimen of 200-mg mifepristone orally which blocks the hormone progesterone that is required to maintain a pregnancy. At home, 24 hours later, on September 11, she followed the clinics instructions to vaginally insert 800-mcg of

misoprostol to induce labor contractions and expel the fetus.

Holly had experienced severe cramping and pain, and went to the emergency room. She was examined, given pain medication, and discharged. At her boyfriends insistence, she returned to the emergency room on September 17, but by then her condition had deteriorated and efforts to save her were futile.

Monty Patterson, Holly's father, told the San Francisco Chronicle, "The medical community treats this as a simple pill you take, as if you're getting rid of a headache. The procedure, the follow-ups, it's all too lackadaisical. The girl gets a pill. Then she's sent home to do the rest on her own. There are just too many things that can go wrong."

Three other women were identified as having died of infection deaths after RU-486 deaths in the Los Angeles area: Chanelle Bryant, Oriane Shevin, and Vivian Tran. Chanelle got her abortion drugs at a Planned Parenthood, and Oriane and Vivian got theirs from National Abortion Federation members. Holly's death was the first case of a *Clostridium sordellii* toxic shock infection after medical abortion reported in the United States. Since 2001, there have been 12 reported deaths from sepsis (serious infection involving the blood) and 9 of these were from *Clostridium sordellii*.