

CVS seeks verification on drugs with possible abortion use



FILE - A CVS Health product is displayed at a store in North Andover, Mass., Monday, May 3, 2021. CVS Health is asking pharmacists in some states to verify that a few of the prescriptions they provide will not be used end a pregnancy. A spokesman said Thursday, July 21, 2022, that the drugstore chain recently started doing this for methotrexate and misoprostol, two drugs used in medication abortions but also to treat other conditions. (AP Photo/Elise Amendola, File)

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CVS Health is asking pharmacists in some states to verify that a few of the prescriptions they provide will not be used end a pregnancy.

A spokesman said Thursday that the drugstore chain recently started doing this for methotrexate and misoprostol, two drugs used in medication abortions but also to treat other conditions.

Spokesman Mike DeAngelis said the policy started the first week in July in Alabama, Arkansas, Idaho, Oklahoma, and Texas.

The drugstore chain's request comes after the U.S. Supreme Court [last month overturned Roe v. Wade](#), the 1973 decision that had provided a constitutional right to abortion. The ruling is expected to lead to abortion bans in roughly half the states.

DeAngelis said state laws that restrict the dispensing of medications used for abortions have forced the company to start the validations. He noted that some of the laws come with criminal penalties.

The drugstore chain, which is based in Woonsocket, Rhode Island, is asking care providers to help by including their diagnosis on the prescriptions.

DeAngelis said CVS Health will still fill prescriptions for miscarriages or ectopic pregnancies, which grow outside the womb and are not viable.

“We will continue to focus on delivering care to our patients while complying with state laws and federal guidance that continues to evolve,” DeAngelis said in an email.

The Supreme Court decision has put pharmacies in the middle of an intense national debate. Earlier this month, the Biden administration [warned pharmacies not to discriminate](#) against women over the prescriptions they seek.

The administration noted that examples of discrimination could include a pharmacy that refuses to fill a prescription of misoprostol prescribed to help deal with a severe stomach ulcer.

Methotrexate also is used to treat several types of cancers as well as rheumatoid arthritis, according to the Mayo Clinic.

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