

1. Talmud, Berachot 10a

Isaiah replied: It is because you have not been involved in procreation.

Hezekiah explained: I saw in a Divinely inspired vision that I would have bad children!

Isaiah replied: What business do you have in the secrets of the Merciful One? You should do as you are instructed, and Gd will do whatever pleases Gd.

2. Classes on Abortion

- For doctors <https://www.yutorah.org/lectures/lecture.cfm/893577/>
- At Beth Emeth, Part 1 <https://www.yutorah.org/lectures/lecture.cfm/911017/>
- At Beth Emeth, Part 2 <https://www.yutorah.org/lectures/lecture.cfm/911546/>

3. Rabbi Moshe Feinstein (20th century USA), Igrot Moshe Choshen Mishpat 2:69

It is even more clear in the Rambam that killing a fetus is murder, for he based the permission to cut a fetus to save a mother on the fetus's status as a pursuer attempting to kill her...

4. Rabbi Yosef ben Moshe Trani (16th-17th century Israel/Turkey), Maharit 1:97

Tosafot there wrote, "Although he is exempt regarding the abortion, it is not permitted." This is because it is prohibited as an act of wounding.

5. Rabbi Yair Bachrach (17th century Germany), Chavot Yair 31

Certainly, we may not cause its death, for this would certainly be prohibited ab initio. It is no better than [destroying seed]...

6. Rabbi Aharon Lichtenstein (20th-21st century Israel), *Abortion: A Halakhic Perspective*, Tradition 25:4 (1991)

Assuming that we set aside certain general ethical and religious norms such as "You shall do that which is upright and good," "You shall be holy," and "You shall follow in the ways of G-d," there would be, according to this view, no biblical prohibition to kill any fetus.

7. Genetic Screening <https://www.yutorah.org/lectures/lecture.cfm/812684/>

Halachah vs. Pain?

8. Rabbi Shlomo Zalman Auerbach (20th century Israel), Minchat Shlomo 3:103:1

I am uncertain regarding one who has a genetic disease, and his children will live all their lives in pain, or one who suffers from hemophilia, which passes to males. May he refrain from fulfilling procreation, marrying a woman who cannot produce children? One is not obligated to spend more than 1/3 or 1/5 of his funds for a mitzvah, even if the mitzvah is only available temporarily, and this man feels that his pain, and that of his children, are worth much more than 1/3 of his assets. Or should we say that one should not investigate such circumstances, and for this we say, "What business do you have in the secrets of the Merciful One?"...

9. Rabbi Asher Weiss (21st century Israel), Minchat Asher 1:69

It appears that if one is exempt from a mitzvah due to his own suffering even though he has a personal obligation, then how much more so is he exempt when fulfilling the mitzvah would cause unsurpassable pain to others – and many times more so when it would cause a life of pain for an unborn child. It appears, according to this, that where there is great concern that the children produced will have defects in their body and mind, and in the natural order of things their lives will be lives of suffering and indescribable pain, he is exempt from procreation.

10. Rabbi Aryeh Katz (21st century Israel), Techumin 36, מצוות 'פרו ורבו' אצל בני זוג נשאי מחלה גנטית

Today, when one could fulfill procreation via IVF and PGD, there is no room to follow the natural course and take the risk of producing ill children. In truth, there is room to argue that since some of these severe genetic diseases are conveyed on a recessive gene, and the risk of an ill child is only 25%... then in the majority of cases, the child will be healthy, and we should follow the majority. And even though we don't follow the majority when saving lives, in these cases we are generally not speaking of saving lives. But in my humble opinion, it appears that we should follow popular opinion regarding level and severity of risk...

11. Rabbi J. David Bleich (21st century USA), Tradition 36:4 (2002), *Communications*

Dr. Reisner's point with regard to a distinction between *in utero* and *ex utero* gestation I find to be confusing. He concedes that a fetus conceived *ex utero* and brought to term in an incubator is a human being for all purposes of Halakhah... If it is conceded that *in utero* conception is not a necessary condition of "humanhood," I fail to understand why obligations vis-à-vis an *ex utero* fetus should be any different from obligations vis-à-vis an *in utero* fetus.

12. Rabbi Dr. Avraham Steinberg (21st century Israel), הרפואה כהלכה, איבחון טרום-השרשתי

When there is a meaningful concern for a severe genetic disease, such as where both mates are carriers of a recessive gene (like Tay-Sachs), or one of the mates is a carrier of a dominant gene (like Huntington's Disease), they may use PGD, meaning for the two mates to engage in IVF, to check whether the eggs or the fertilized eggs are afflicted with the disease, and to destroy eggs which are determined to be affected, and to use only the "healthy" eggs, meaning those which do not carry the gene for the disease. And one must be very careful not to switch the sperm and egg, and to appoint a special supervisor to oversee that which is done in the IVF unit.

Footnote: So ruled for me Rabbi Yosef Shalom Elyashiv, Rabbi Moshe Halberstam and Rabbi Yehoshua Neuwirth...

13. Rabbi Dr. Avraham Steinberg (21st century Israel), הרפואה כהלכה, איבחון טרום-השרשתי

One may use PGD even when the issue is that one mate carries a recessive gene, on condition that IVF was required and practiced anyway due to fertility problems. But one may not carry out a process of IVF and PGD only to avoid a situation of carrying a recessive gene.

Using PGD to Choose Gender

14. Michelle J Bayefsky, *Comparative preimplantation genetic diagnosis policy in Europe and the USA and its implications for reproductive tourism*, Reproductive Biomedicine Society Online 2016 Dec Vol. 3

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5612618/>

Unlike many European nations, the USA has no regulations concerning the use of preimplantation genetic diagnosis (PGD), a technique employed during some fertility treatments to select embryos based on their genes. As such, PGD can and is used for a variety of controversial purposes, including sex selection, selection for children with disabilities such as deafness, and selection for 'saviour siblings' who can serve as tissue donors for sick relatives. The lack of regulation, which is due to particular features of the US political and economic landscape, has ethical and practical implications for patients seeking PGD around the world.

15. Assisted Human Reproduction Act, S.C. 2004, c.2

5 (1) No person shall knowingly...

(e) for the purpose of creating a human being, perform any procedure or provide, prescribe or administer any thing that would ensure or increase the probability that an embryo will be of a particular sex, or that would identify the sex of an *in vitro* embryo, except to prevent, diagnose or treat a sex-linked disorder or disease;

16. Rabbi Dr. Avraham Steinberg (21st century Israel), הרפואה כהלכה, איבחון טרום-השרשתי

Generally, one may not encourage a process of IVF with PGD only to choose the gender of the fetus. This is correct even where the selection of gender is for a couple who have children only from one gender, and they wish to fulfill procreation...