

MARICEL'S STORY

Globally, nearly 70,000 women and girls die from unsafe abortion each year.

Maricel was eighteen years old and already had a child when she died of a severe infection after self-inducing an abortion using three different methods.

Maricel's mother was employed as a domestic worker abroad and wanted **Maricel** to have the same opportunity. Maricel applied for, and had just been granted, a visa permitting her to work abroad when she found out she was pregnant. She was still breastfeeding her first child and had thought that she was adequately protected from becoming pregnant again. Afraid that the pregnancy would mean she would lose the employment opportunity, Maricel attempted to induce an abortion.

Desperate, Maricel tried several means of abortion. She first attempted to end her pregnancy herself by taking **misoprostol**. After two weeks of not experiencing any bleeding, Maricel went to a **hilot** for an abdominal massage. Three days later, still not experiencing any bleeding, she sought the help of a neighbor, who directed her to a woman who performed “**catheterizations**,” meaning that she inserted catheters into the uterus for women as a method of abortion. By that time, Maricel was in her third month of pregnancy. For two weeks following the catheterization, Maricel was bleeding vaginally and feverish. She delayed going to a hospital because she was scared of what would happen to her since she had illegally induced an abortion, but finally sought medical treatment when her fever and bleeding persisted.

Maricel arrived at Fabella Memorial Hospital pale, bleeding, and running a high grade fever.

The **doctors** tried to treat Maricel with antibiotics and decided to perform a dilation and curettage (D&C) to complete the abortion, but it was too late: **Maricel died on the operating table as a result of the sepsis caused by the unsafe abortion.**

Maricel delayed seeking **lifesaving medical attention** for the complications she experienced because she **feared the law and punishment.**