

Pain and Bleeding in Early Pregnancy - Information Leaflet

What causes the bleeding?

Bleeding in early pregnancy is very common and we are often unable to tell you why this happened. Your bleeding is unlikely to have happened because of anything that you did or did not do.

What is a 'threatened' miscarriage?

A 'threatened' miscarriage is when you have had some bleeding and/or mild/moderate cramping pain in early pregnancy

What will happen to my pregnancy?

Happily most pregnancies continue normally, however, a small number of women will go on to suffer a miscarriage and unfortunately no amount of caution or rest can prevent a miscarriage from happening.

How will I know my pregnancy is OK?

We will arrange further assessment of your pregnancy with a follow up phone call. Depending on your history, the approximate number of weeks pregnant you are and on the severity of your symptoms, we **may** arrange a scan.

If a scan is arranged and shows an ongoing pregnancy (a baby with a heartbeat), then you would usually be offered a routine Downs Syndrome screening and dating scan at around 12- 13 weeks of pregnancy.

If your scan suggests that your pregnancy is developing in the womb, and therefore we are not concerned that you have an ectopic pregnancy (this is where the pregnancy develops outside of the womb), but it is too early to see the baby, we will discuss the options for a further scan with you.

In some particular circumstances for women who have experienced repeated miscarriages, treatment with progesterone pessaries may be offered.

If your scan suggests there is a possibility of an ectopic pregnancy, then further investigations, which may include blood tests +/- further scans, will be discussed with you depending on your symptoms.

Unfortunately, trying to find out what is happening with some early pregnancy problems takes time. Waiting for further scans or investigations can be very stressful; our nurses, midwives and doctors are aware of this and will endeavour to support and advise you wherever possible.

At Home

Having experienced an episode of bleeding you may continue to have further bleeding or brown staining for several days. You should use sanitary towels and not tampons during this time. If your pain remains manageable and your bleeding is no heavier than a period then we would advise you to repeat a pregnancy test after 10-14 days. If this remains positive then we would continue with routine pregnancy care.

It is possible however, that your bleeding increases further; it may become heavier than a period with some clots and your pain may become more intense. This could be a sign that you are having a miscarriage. Everyone is different but usually the level of pain and amount of bleeding associated with a miscarriage increases with the number of weeks pregnant you are. If you think you are having a miscarriage, you should contact us on the numbers below for more support and advice. If you think you are under 10 weeks pregnant, you don't always need to come into the hospital; if you are coping with the pain and bleeding and you have another adult with you, you can remain in the comfort of your own home, in fact, the majority of women diagnosed with a miscarriage under 10 weeks pregnant are treated at home.

If you think you are more than 10 weeks pregnant, or your pain becomes severe or you feel dizzy / lightheaded or you begin to feel unwell then you should contact us straight away and may need to come to the hospital.

Your feelings

This can be a frightening and anxious time for you, your partner and your family. Everyone copes differently with their feelings but it may help to talk about your feelings with family and friends. The Early Pregnancy Nurse may arrange to keep in touch with you during this period, if you wish.

If you are bleeding heavily and / or pain increases or you are worried about any of your symptoms, please contact us for further advice:

Early Pregnancy Nurse	01387 241266	(Mon – Fri 9am – 4.30pm)
Women's Outpatient's Department	01387 241200	(Mon – Fri 9am-4.30pm)
Maternity Assessment Unit	01387 241211	(Weekends / Out of hours)
NHS 24	111	

Miscarriage Association:

Support line: 01924 200799. Monday-Friday, 9am - 4pm

Email: info@miscarriageassociation.org.uk

Website: www.miscarriageassociation.org.uk

Glasgow Pregnancy Choices:

Support Line: 0141 248 2667

Email: info@glasgowpregnancychoices.org

Website: www.glasgowpregnancychoices.org