



Information for women with bleeding in early pregnancy

Patient information Leaflet

January 2018

Bleeding in early pregnancy is often very alarming for women as they worry they may be experiencing a miscarriage.

Bleeding in early pregnancy occurs in one in every four pregnancies but doesn't always end in miscarriage.

Women need reassurance about their pregnancy as quickly as possible to reduce their worry.

The staff from the Emergency Department and Early Pregnancy Assessment Unit (EPAU) at Tameside Hospital aim to give this reassurance as quickly as possible and it is hoped that this leaflet will give some information as to how this help and advice is given.

Causes of early pregnancy bleeding

- ❖ Implantation of early pregnancy in the womb
- ❖ Threatened miscarriage but pregnancy may continue
- ❖ Miscarriage
- ❖ Pregnancy implanting outside the womb

What should I do if I am bleeding in early pregnancy?

- ❖ If bleeding remains like a period or less, continue normal activities if you are able. You will not affect what happens to the pregnancy.
- ❖ If the bleeding becomes heavier than a period then you should attend The Emergency Department particularly if you have fainted (blacked out)
- ❖ If the bleeding is accompanied by constant abdominal pain and/or fainting you should also attend The Emergency Department

What should I expect to happen in the days following reporting of early pregnancy bleeding to Hospital?

Modern pregnancy tests can accurately test for pregnancy even before a period is due (at 3 weeks) and well before a pregnancy can visibly be seen on a scan machine.

The most helpful way to understand what is happening to your pregnancy is to measure the pregnancy hormone level (HCG).

One of the first tests EPAU will do is a blood test to measure this level (your blood count and blood group is usually also measured at the same time). The HCG blood test will often be repeated so that the trend in the results can be looked at.

How to understand the blood HCG results?

Rapidly rising levels in HCG in the early weeks of pregnancy are a very accurate indication that the pregnancy is continuing to develop. Once the HCG levels reach 1500 iu/l then it is likely that the pregnancy can be seen on scan. A scan will therefore be organised to be performed within a few days if the HCG level is above 1500iu/l.

OR

A fall in HCG levels usually means that the pregnancy is ending in miscarriage. The

staff explaining your results will help you with your recovery from miscarriage.

OR

Sometimes the HCG levels will only slowly rise or stay at more or less steady values. This can mean the pregnancy is developing outside the womb as in ectopic pregnancy. You will then be advised to attend EPAU for help in recovering from this by;

- ❖ Keyhole operation
- ❖ Injection of a drug called Methotrexate and further monitoring as an out-patient
- ❖ Monitoring only as ectopic pregnancy can sometimes resolve spontaneously

Outcomes after early pregnancy bleeding

Remember bleeding in early pregnancy is common and does not always mean you will miscarry. It can take up to 2 weeks to understand exactly what is happening to your pregnancy but if all the tests are normal then it is likely the pregnancy will go on as normal.

Even if you experience miscarriage it is very likely that your next pregnancy will be normal.

For more information on “Bleeding and pain in early pregnancy” use the following link <http://www.rcog.org.uk/files/rcog-corp/uploaded-files/PIBleedingPain2008.pdf>

Early Pregnancy Assessment Unit appointment:

Date & Time:.....

Contact phone number Early Pregnancy Assessment Unit: 0161 922 6544/ 6673

If you have any questions you want to ask, you can use this space below to remind you

If you have a visual impairment this leaflet can be made available in bigger print or on audiotape. If you require either of these options please contact the Patient Information Centre on 0161 922 5332

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