

ADVICE REGARDING BLEEDING & PAIN IN EARLY PREGNANCY.

Your scan today has shown a viable pregnancy and no cause for concern. Sometimes symptoms can persist or return. This leaflet aims to offer you some reassurance and answer any questions you may have.

Do I need to have another scan?

Not necessarily. Symptoms of bleeding/discomfort may continue on and off throughout the first 12 weeks. If symptoms change, including any of the following, then please contact the Early Pregnancy Assessment Unit (EPAU) directly:

- The bleeding is constant and persists for more than a week.
- The bleeding is increasing and you are passing fresh blood with clots.
- You have pain which is getting worse and is not eased by simple painkillers (paracetamol).

Is there anything I can do or should avoid?

Whilst you have active bleeding you should:

- Only use sanitary towels - do not use tampons.
- Avoid sex until bleeding has completely stopped.
- Avoid swimming.
- Rest when you need to – listen to your body.
- Go to work only if you feel able.

Unfortunately there is nothing you, or the Doctors or Nurses, can do to 'protect' this pregnancy or stop a miscarriage happening. Be sensible, look after yourself, be healthy and avoid stress.

Is it normal to experience bleeding in early pregnancy?

Bleeding in early pregnancy is not unusual. Approximately 1 in 3 women will experience bleeding. The majority of time there is no obvious reason found.

Your scan may have identified an area of bleeding within the womb or its lining, this is not uncommon. Some women may experience brown/red loss, which can be fresh, during this time. An area of bleeding does not mean you will definitely miscarry. Be aware of your symptoms and contact EPAU with any concerns.

If your blood group is Rhesus negative, please be aware that Anti D is not routinely given below 12 weeks pregnant (Anti-D is an injection given to prevent problems when a woman with a negative blood group gives birth to a baby with a positive blood group). Please be assured that if you need it, we will give it.

Is it normal to experience pain in early pregnancy?

Once a scan has shown that the pregnancy is developing within the womb, then the worry of an ectopic is excluded.

It is not uncommon to experience pain in the early weeks of pregnancy. Your body is changing. The womb is growing to allow baby to develop, and the muscles are stretching which can cause discomfort similar to period pains. Take paracetamol if needed (this is safe to take during pregnancy). If you have experienced bleeding this is often associated with crampy abdominal pain as the womb tries to expel the blood. This pain should settle as the bleeding settles.

Rising hormone levels can cause your bowels to become sluggish, often causing discomfort. Drink plenty of fluids and eat a healthy diet, including a good amount of fruit and vegetables. If constipation becomes a problem then discuss with your Midwife/GP/Pharmacist about stool softeners suitable for use during pregnancy.

Where do I go for advice and support?

We appreciate that despite a positive scan result you may still be worried about your baby and be anxious that something is wrong. The risk of miscarriage reduces as you progress through the early stages of pregnancy and reduces significantly from 12 weeks.

Please feel free to contact the EPAU with any concerns. In the EPAU we care for ladies between 6 weeks and 13weeks 6days pregnant.

***EPAU – 01423 555373 (answer phone available).
We are open Monday – Friday, and Sunday 08.30 – 2pm.***

For those with concerns after this period contact:

Ante-natal clinic – 01423 553010.

Maternity Assessment centre (MAC) – 01423 557531

What now?

By now you should have referred yourself to the maternity services. Once you have completed your online referral you should be contacted within 2-3 weeks. You should expect to have your first appointment at approx. 8-10 weeks pregnant, and then your dating/screening scan at approx. 12 weeks. Your Midwife and GP are both excellent sources of information and support.

If you require this information in an alternative language or format (such as Braille, audiotape or large print), please ask the staff who are looking after you.

