

Welcome to the Early Pregnancy Assessment Unit (EPAU).

01423 555373

Monday-Friday 9.00am-2.00pm

Sunday 9.00am-2.00pm

The Early Pregnancy Assessment Unit (EPAU) is a nurse-led service. The Specialist Nurse team is supported by the Gynaecology team and overseen by a Specialist Consultant.

Referrals are accepted from Health Professionals for women experiencing bleeding and/or pain in early pregnancy. Women should be more than 6 weeks pregnant when they are referred (it can be difficult to see a viable pregnancy before this time), and up to 12 weeks and 6 days.

Self-referrals are **only** accepted from those with a history of recurrent miscarriage, previous ectopic or molar pregnancy.

Your referral

Your Health Professional has arranged for the EPAU to contact you, so that we may assess your pregnancy. You may have experienced bleeding and/or pain, and we hope to be able to tell you what is happening. One of our Specialist Nurses will contact you by telephone, as soon as possible following your referral (this may not always be the same day). We will arrange an appointment for you (again not always the same day) and you are welcome to bring your partner or a close friend with you. Please bear in mind that your visit will probably last longer than an hour. You will be required to have a full bladder for your scan. A water fountain is available both on EPAU and in the Radiology department (please bear in mind that you may have a wait for your scan, do not overfill your bladder as it can be extremely uncomfortable!). Scans are carried out in the main Radiology department, between 9.15am-10.15am Mon-Fri and 9.30am-10.45am Sun.

On arrival at the hospital, please go directly to the EPAU. We are based on Nidderdale Ward, 1st floor, Main Wing, Harrogate District Hospital.

What will happen?

- The Specialist Nurse will take a brief history. She will ask you about your current pregnancy, any previous pregnancies, and your general health.
- The scan will be carried out over your abdomen. Sometimes, this method is not accurate enough, and so you may need a trans-vaginal (internal) scan. An internal scan is not usually uncomfortable, and will not harm the pregnancy.
- Once your scan is completed, you will return to the EPAU. The results of your scan will be discussed with you.

What happens after the scan?

- If your scan confirms a live pregnancy (a heartbeat is seen), then you will be discharged. You will need to make an appointment at your GP surgery for ongoing ante natal care.
- If the scan shows that you have had a miscarriage, the nurse will discuss the options available to you. You will be given all the information and time you need to make an informed decision.
- If the test shows that you have a pregnancy growing outside of the womb (ectopic pregnancy) then you may need to have further tests and the options of management will be discussed with you.
- Sometimes a scan may be 'inconclusive' – this means that it may not be possible to give you a definite answer on your first visit. It may be that it is too early to see a heartbeat on scan. In this situation we may arrange for blood tests to look at the pregnancy hormone levels and/or another scan.

You will be kept fully informed throughout your care, but please feel free to ask any questions, or discuss your concerns at any time.

We understand that this can be an extremely stressful and emotional time. Bleeding and/or pain in early pregnancy are not unusual and do not necessarily indicate a problem, but it should always be investigated.

Should you require any further information prior to your visit, please do not hesitate to contact us on 01423 555373. If we do not answer, then please leave a message and we will return your call as soon as we are able.

Further sources of information:

www.miscarriageorganisation.org.uk
www.earlypregnancy.org.uk

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.