

Medical Management of Miscarriage

Important information for patients

Contact numbers

Should you require any additional information or help,
please contact:

Early Pregnancy Assessment Unit (EPAU)

Tel: 01270 273723 / 01270 273724

Monday to Friday 8.00am – 4.00pm

Please ring the EPAU first and leave a message.

Gynaecology Ward

Tel: 01270 612066 / 612068

24 hour number for emergency situations

This leaflet is available in audio, Braille, large print and other languages.
To request a copy, please telephone 01270 273723 / 273724.



We understand that this can be an upsetting time for you and your family. This leaflet has been designed to answer questions you and your loved ones may have regarding medical management of miscarriage.

You will be given the opportunity to discuss with staff whether you wish to remain at the hospital throughout your treatment (as an in-patient), or go home once the treatment has been started (as an out-patient). Details of each are outlined below so you can choose which option will best suit your situation. In certain circumstances you may be advised to undergo your treatment as an in-patient, the reasons for this will be discussed with you.

Before treatment can take place the Early Pregnancy Assessment Unit (EPAU) Sister or Nurse Practitioner will complete several consent forms with you. These forms are a legal requirement and the staff need to make sure you understand and agree to the treatment. These forms are:

- Consent for Treatment
- Consent to the Examination of Fetal Tissue

The laboratory will examine the pregnancy (fetal tissue) to check for an abnormality called a molar pregnancy. If the pregnancy is found to be molar by the laboratory, you will be invited into the hospital to talk to a Consultant. The person who completes your consent forms will discuss this with you in more detail. If you require more information, please visit The Miscarriage Association website: www.miscarriageassociation.co.uk and search for hydatidiform mole.

Before starting treatment we will also take a blood test which will check your full blood count. This is to ensure you are not anaemic.

In-patient

If you chose to stay at the hospital you will be given an appointment to come to the Gynaecology Ward. On the day of admission to hospital you will be allocated a bed and a nurse will be assigned to look after you. The nurse will then administer some medication vaginally (called misoprostol). This medication is a prostaglandin and is likely to give you some strong lower tummy cramps/pains and some moderate to heavy vaginal bleeding.

Once you have had the medication, the nurse will ask you to use liners each time you go to the toilet in order to assess your bleeding and to identify if you have miscarried. You will be on the ward for approximately six hours. In this time if you need any pain relief or support there is a nurse available.

You may have someone to stay with you for support such as a partner/friend or family member.

Out-patient

If you choose to have the treatment as an out-patient then you need to have someone who can drive you home and stay with you overnight. The EPAU or the Gynaecology Ward nurse will administer the medication for you the same way as an in-patient. This will be carried out in the privacy of the treatment room. You will be asked to stay for approximately 15 minutes.

If you feel well after this, you will be allowed to go home and miscarry at home. If you pass the pregnancy at home and you wish for the hospital to examine the pregnancy, you can contact the Gynaecology Ward or EPAU (contact details on page 3) and they can arrange to this for you.

Side effects

As well as abdominal cramps/pain there are some other side effects of the prostaglandin which include diarrhoea, nausea and fever. These tend to settle within 24 hours but if you are concerned or the symptoms persist, please feel free to contact the Gynaecology Ward or EPAU for advice. Not everyone will experience side effects.

Analgesia

We recommend that prior to having medical management you buy some simple analgesia to have at home such as paracetamol or co-codamol and ibuprofen providing that you are able to take them. Please make sure that you have some sanitary towels at home. We recommend that you do not use tampons until your next normal period.

Medication information

The medication that we give to you is 'unlicensed' for treatment of miscarriage. However, it has been used safely to manage miscarriage for many years nationally and internationally.

A drug company must have a licence to advertise and sell a medicine. The licence states what the medicine can be used for and the dose. To get a licence the drug company must prove the drug works and that it is safe to use and publish clinical trial information. When doctors know more about how a medicine works they want to try using it for other conditions in further clinical trials. If a medicine is used in a way that does not meet the strict rules set out in the licence, then it is described as 'unlicensed use'.

Discharge advice

Once you are discharged we will ask you to repeat a home pregnancy test in three weeks' time to ensure that it is now negative. It is essential that if it is still positive, you contact the EPAU for further advice or review. If you feel you have not miscarried, it is likely that you may miscarry at home over the next few days. Sometimes you are unaware that you have miscarried as this can happen when you are on the toilet.

If you feel that you want to come back for a scan rather than repeat a pregnancy test, please inform the nurse or contact the EPAU and this can be arranged. However, if you repeat a pregnancy test and it is negative you can be reassured that the process has been successful and a scan is not necessary.

You can resume sexual intercourse once your bleeding has stopped and you should avoid unprotected intercourse until after your next normal period.

If you have any problems once discharged or you would like some further advice, please contact the **EPAU on 01270 273723 / 273724 (Monday to Friday 8.00am – 4.00pm)**, leave a message and your call will be returned.

For urgent advice, please contact the Gynaecology Ward on 01270 612066 / 612068 available 24 hours.