

## What happens if I don't have a miscarriage before my next scan, but the pregnancy has not grown?

If your follow up scan shows that your pregnancy is definitely not continuing, we will discuss the different ways to manage this problem. The options are:

- **Expectant management** – doing nothing and allowing nature to take its course (it is likely that you will miscarry over the next few weeks)
- **Medical management** – taking tablets to speed up the miscarriage
- **Surgical management** – having a small operation to empty your uterus (womb).

Further leaflets are available to explain these options.

### Contact us

#### If you have non-urgent questions

Please contact The Emergency Gynaecology Unit (EGU) on:  
01872 252686

#### If you need urgent assistance

Please contact Gynaecology Ward on:  
01872 253163

Further information and support is available from:  
**The Miscarriage Association**

Tel: 01924 200799

[www.miscarriageassociation.org.uk](http://www.miscarriageassociation.org.uk)

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If you would like this leaflet in large print, braille, audio version or in another language, please contact the General Office on 01872 252690



## Unclear pregnancy scan / possible miscarriage



### **Who this leaflet is for**

This leaflet is for women who have had an ultrasound scan, but it is unclear whether the pregnancy is still growing.

We are sorry that we've been unable to reassure you today. We hope that this information is of some help at this difficult time.

### **What does this mean?**

Today's ultrasound scan has shown that you are pregnant, but we can't be sure whether the pregnancy is going to miscarry or possibly continue.

### **Why isn't the scan clear?**

Ultrasound scans are very helpful, but sometimes one scan on its own cannot give a definite answer and we need to do another scan in two weeks to compare it. It may be that the dates of your last period are not accurate and the pregnancy is not as far on as we first thought, or it may be that the dates are accurate and the pregnancy started, but then stopped growing.

### **What's the most likely diagnosis?**

In our experience, this is usually because the pregnancy has stopped growing and you are going to miscarry.

### **What should I do now?**

You don't need to do anything different for now. We will see you again in two weeks to do another scan, and then we will know definitely whether or not your pregnancy has stopped growing.

### **What happens if I start bleeding more heavily?**

If the pregnancy is not growing, you may start to bleed more heavily before we next see you. This means you may be starting to miscarry.

### **What will the bleeding be like?**

You may have episodes of bleeding before the actual miscarriage happens. This can be very confusing as you may not know if the miscarriage has happened or not. The amount of bleeding depends on how advanced your pregnancy is. You may have a great deal of bleeding with lumps (clots) of blood coming away. It may be a lot heavier than a period and can be frightening.

### **Will it hurt?**

Your uterus needs to contract to miscarry the pregnancy. Some women have described this contracting as labour pains. We can give you some pain killers to take home with you. If you need further pain relief you can come into hospital.

### **Will I see anything?**

You may see the pregnancy sac, which may be 'jelly-like' in appearance. It is up to you what

you do with this. Some women like to bury it in the garden, however many women miscarry into the toilet.

### **How long will the bleeding last?**

After a miscarriage, the bleeding can continue for one to two weeks. It should get lighter, like the end of a period. Use sanitary pads only, not tampons. If the bleeding becomes heavy or if you have an unpleasant smelling discharge, see your family doctor as you may need antibiotics for an infection.

### **How will I know the miscarriage has definitely happened?**

We will see you as arranged in two weeks. Whether you need another scan at this time will depend on what's happened since we last saw you. Please keep this appointment as we would like to see how you are. However, if you don't attend, we will call you. Please make sure we have your preferred phone number.

### **When should I seek help?**

If you feel faint or dizzy with the bleeding or have severe pain, phone the ward on the number given at the end of this leaflet. If the matter is not urgent but you would like some advice, phone the Early Pregnancy Unit within normal working hours or leave a message on the answer phone. The staff in The Early Pregnancy Unit will be happy to speak to you.