

Pregnancy of unknown location

We are very sorry we weren't able to see a pregnancy on your scan today, and we hope you find this information useful.

What is a pregnancy of unknown location?

This is the term given when a pregnancy doesn't show on an ultrasound scan. Therefore we can't be sure how or where your pregnancy is progressing. There are three possible reasons for this:

1. A very early normal pregnancy - The pregnancy may be in the right place but just very early and too small to be seen on the scan. This may happen if you are unsure of your dates or your periods are irregular.
2. A miscarriage - The pregnancy may have already been lost if you have been bleeding. Sometimes pregnancy tests can remain positive for a few weeks.
3. An ectopic pregnancy - Your pregnancy may be growing outside of your uterus (womb). This type of pregnancy can be difficult to see on the first scan. It is important that we don't miss ectopic pregnancies. If not recognised, they can be dangerous, so we need to monitor you closely.

Why has a blood test been taken?

This is to measure the level of beta HCG in your blood.

What is 'Beta HCG?'

This is the pregnancy hormone. It's level can be measured and can help us decide where your pregnancy is, and what's happening to it. When we have the results we will let you know when we need to see you again – either for another blood test or another scan.

What should I do if I get pain or bleeding?

If you develop severe pain or heavy bleeding, you should contact the ward immediately on the number below. If you have some mild pain or bleeding and just want advice, ring the early pregnancy unit during the day.

Until your final diagnosis is made, we would advise you not to travel outside of the county and to avoid strenuous exercise or sexual intercourse.

If you have any further questions, or in an emergency, please contact:

Emergency Gynaecology Unit

Monday - Friday 08.30 -16.30

01872 252686

Gynaecology ward

Monday - Friday 16.30 - 08.30 (or weekends)

01872 253163

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