

Hydatiform mole following miscarriage



Following your recent miscarriage, a sample of your pregnancy tissue has been looked at closely under a microscope by our Histology department. This has shown some abnormal changes within the tissue called a hydatidiform mole, or a molar pregnancy.

The loss of your baby is likely to make you feel very sad. In addition, this may be the first time you have heard about this condition, so it is likely to make you feel shocked, confused and anxious.

The purpose of this leaflet is to explain fully what a molar pregnancy is and why it is necessary for you to be followed-up by the hydatidiform mole follow-up service based at Charing Cross Hospital in London.

What is a molar pregnancy?

This is a result of an abnormality occurring at fertilisation (when the sperm and egg meet). Nobody knows exactly why this happens.

There are two types of molar pregnancy:

1. A **complete mole** is where the placenta grows as a series of cysts (like grapes) but there is no fetus (unborn child).
2. A **partial mole** is similar, but there are signs of some abnormal fetal development. The fetus cannot survive.

How common is it?

It is rare and occurs in around one in every 600 pregnancies.

Why do I need follow-up?

Occasionally, there may be some molar tissue left behind inside the womb. If this happens and it is not treated there is a chance that the tissue may spread and very occasionally becomes cancerous.

Have I got cancer?

No you have not got cancer. If we did not know about your molar pregnancy and you didn't have follow-up, there is a small chance a cancer could develop. However, by the molar pregnancy being detected and by having follow-up you are protected. Even if a cancer developed, it is almost 100% curable.

What does follow-up involve?

You will receive a sample kit through the post from Charing Cross Hospital, which contains two tubes – one for your urine test and one for a blood test. This will come with instructions and will need to be posted back to Charing Cross for testing. Blood and urine tests are needed every two weeks until the result is normal and then just urine tests every four weeks. All the sample kits will be sent to you through the post with instructions. Your results will be sent to your GP and gynaecologist. You may also phone Charing Cross Hospital for your results if you wish.

How long does follow-up last?

This depends upon your results. Follow-up is usually at least 6 months, but can be longer, in some cases up to a year or more.

Will I have to go to Charing Cross Hospital in London for follow-up?

Not usually. The follow-up is usually done by post, but if you do need treatment (around 1 in 10 women with a complete mole and around 1 in 100 women with a partial mole), this may need to be done at Charing Cross Hospital.

Will I be able to get pregnant again?

Yes. Having had a molar pregnancy does not make it more difficult to get pregnant again.

When can I try again?

It is recommended that you don't try to get pregnant until your follow-up is complete (usually around 6 months). After this time, if you want, you can try to get pregnant again whenever you feel ready.

What contraception can I use?

You can use any form of contraception you wish (including hormonal contraception like 'the pill', or 'the implant') even before follow up is complete. This advice changed in around 2015, so if you look at older literature, it may say to avoid using hormonal contraception until follow up is complete, but this is not the current advice.

Will I have another molar pregnancy?

It is possible, but very unlikely. This only occurs in around one in 80 women that have had a previous molar pregnancy.

Do I need follow up in the future after other pregnancies?

If you have just had one molar pregnancy, you do not need follow up following another pregnancy anymore. This advice changed in 2017, so if you read older leaflets, it may say you do. If you have had more than one molar pregnancy or had chemotherapy for a molar pregnancy, then you will need to have follow up hormone levels with Charing Cross after any further pregnancies.

Is there anywhere I can get more information?

Further help and support can be obtained by contacting:

Miscarriage Association

c/o Clayton House

Northgate

West Yorkshire WF1 3JS

Tel: 01924 200799

www.miscarriageassociation.org.uk

Also from :

UK Hydatidiform Mole Information & Support service website:

www.hmole-chorio.org.uk

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

Emergency Gynaecology Unit

Monday - Friday 8.30am -4.30pm

01872 252686

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

