

Pregnancy of unknown location

Information for patients and their partners

Following your scan today, it has not been possible to tell you if your pregnancy is definitely situated in the uterus or progressing normally. This is often the case in early pregnancies and it may well result in the outcome being a normal viable pregnancy, but it is just too early to see on scan at the first visit.

We appreciate this is a very anxious time for you and we will keep you informed and give you an answer as soon as possible.

There are four main reasons we cannot give you a definite answer at your first visit:

1. Your pregnancy is too early to see on a scan.
If the uterus appears empty or only a small sac is seen, it may well be the first sign of a viable pregnancy, but if there are no contents within the sac, then we cannot confirm viability or location at this point. However many pregnancies will be successful and develop normally.
2. You have completely miscarried, particularly if you have had history of a heavy bleed, but your pregnancy test is still positive because your hormone levels are still falling.
3. Your pregnancy has stopped growing at an early stage particularly if you expected to be a lot further on in the pregnancy. (Sac only).
4. The pregnancy is growing outside the womb (ectopic) this is much less common but has to be ruled out. Around ten percent of pregnancies are ectopic. Blood tests may help us give you more information to how your pregnancy is progressing. We will ask to check your Bhcg (pregnancy hormone levels) over 48/96 hours. These should rise by approximately 63%. If this occurs then we will be more confident about the location and viability of your pregnancy. We will then arrange a follow up scan at the best interval to give you a definite answer.

If the levels fall by 50% or more, sadly we know this pregnancy is failing and will discuss management (if any) is needed.

Pregnancy of unknown location

If the blood tests are static or rise or fall less than expected, then we are a little more concerned about the location, but even then most patients will not have an ectopic pregnancy. If you feel you need further information please speak to Early Pregnancy Unit staff.

Follow up appointment in EPU:

on _____

at _____

If you feel unwell, dizzy or have any increase in your pain before your next appointment, please ring EPU for advice on 01623 622515, extension 4288 during normal working hours, or ward 14 on 01623 622515, extension 2314 out of working hours.

Further sources of information

NHS Choices: www.nhs.uk/conditions

Our website: www.sfh-tr.nhs.uk

Patient Experience Team (PET)

PET is available to help with any of your compliments, concerns or complaints, and will ensure a prompt and efficient service.

King's Mill Hospital: 01623 672222

Newark Hospital: 01636 685692

Email: sfh-tr.PET@nhs.net

If you would like this information in an alternative format, for example large print or easy read, or if you need help with communicating with us, for example because you use British Sign Language, please let us know. You can call the Patient Experience Team on 01623 672222 or email sfh-tr.PET@nhs.net.

This document is intended for information purposes only and should not replace advice that your relevant health professional would give you. External websites may be referred to in specific cases. Any external websites are provided for your information and convenience. We cannot accept responsibility for the information found on them. If you require a full list of references (if relevant) for this leaflet, please email

sfh-tr.patientinformation@nhs.net or telephone 01623 622515, extension 6927.

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