



Threatened Miscarriage

What is a threatened miscarriage?

A threatened miscarriage is a term used to describe a pregnancy that is developing where some degree of bleeding has occurred or is occurring.

Why am I bleeding?

It is often difficult to tell you why you are bleeding.

Sometimes the bleeding occurs due to an imbalance in the hormones that are being produced during the early weeks of pregnancy. In these cases the bleeding normally settles of its own accord at around 12 – 14 weeks.

Bleeding can also occur around the gestation sac after implantation. This is often picked up on scan and you will be told if this is the case.

Will I go on to miscarry?

This may happen as approximately 20% - 25% of pregnancies result in miscarriage.

What can I do to help?

If the bleeding is due to hormonal imbalance there is nothing you can do. Research has proven that bed-rest in these instances does not help.

If you are told that there is an area of bleeding around the gestation sac then there are several things that will help to prevent the area of bleeding from worsening.

Firstly, try and avoid any strenuous exercise. This does not mean you have to go to bed, but be sensible about what you are doing.

Secondly, it is best to avoid heavy lifting. This may be difficult if you have young children at home, but try and get them to climb on to your knee rather than picking them up. If your job involves heavy lifting then we can give you a note for some time off until the bleeding settles.

Thirdly, it is advisable to avoid sexual intercourse while you are bleeding.

It is also best to wear sanitary towels not tampons as there is an increased risk of infection if you wear tampons for bleeding in pregnancy.

When will the bleeding stop?

If the bleeding is due to hormonal imbalance then the bleeding should settle at around 12 – 14 weeks when the placenta is fully functional and able to maintain the pregnancy.

If the bleeding is due to a bleed around the gestation sac then it is difficult to predict when it will settle. Sometimes the bleeding continues until all of the blood collection has disappeared. Sometimes the blood collection gets absorbed without any further bleeding.

What if the bleeding gets worse?

If the bleeding worsens to more than a normal period with the passage of clots then you should contact the Early Pregnancy Assessment Unit. This does not necessarily mean that the pregnancy will miscarry but we should see you again to ensure that all is still well. If the bleeding is very heavy and you are changing your sanitary pad every hour you should attend A & E.

If you require any further advice or support please contact one of the numbers listed.

Contact Numbers:

Good Hope Hospital 0121 424 7747

Heartlands Hospital 0121 424 0730

Lead Midwife for Early Pregnancy and Miscarriage Care is Rachel Small