

# Early intrauterine pregnancy

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## Information for patients

This leaflet answers some of the questions you may have about early intrauterine pregnancy. If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to speak to the doctors or nurses caring for you.

### Confirming your identity

Before you have a treatment or procedure, our staff will ask you your **name** and **date of birth** and check your **ID band**. If you don't have an ID band we will also ask you to confirm your address.

**If we don't ask these questions, then please ask us to check.**

Ensuring your safety is our primary concern.

## What is an early intrauterine pregnancy?

When the doctor or specialist nurse scanned you today, they diagnosed you with early intrauterine pregnancy. You may or may not have expected your pregnancy to be at an early stage. This diagnosis means that there is a pregnancy sac in the womb, but it is too small to see the baby or its heartbeat. This is sometimes also called 'pregnancy of uncertain viability'.

## What does this mean?

Your pregnancy may appear to be at an earlier stage than expected for one of two reasons.

- You are simply in the early stages of pregnancy, and we just need to give the pregnancy more time to grow, as it is too early to see the embryo (a small baby) and heartbeat. This is more likely if you are unsure of your dates, have irregular periods or have recently stopped taking the contraceptive pill.
- Your pregnancy is not progressing as expected. This is more likely if you are very sure of your dates and they do not seem to match the size of your pregnancy, if you have vaginal bleeding or if your progesterone level is low.

## What happens next?

If your dates do not match what we have seen on your scan or you have had vaginal bleeding, we usually ask you to come in for another scan one to two weeks later depending on the size of the pregnancy sac or embryo. This gives your pregnancy time to develop before we scan you again. After this scan we should be able to date your pregnancy and tell you if it is progressing as we would expect.

## What if I have bleeding?

Vaginal bleeding is common in pregnancy. This does not mean that your pregnancy is not going to progress as expected, but it does increase your risk of a miscarriage.



If your pregnancy looked earlier than we expected on your scan then there is a chance that your pregnancy is not progressing as expected.

If so, you may start to bleed and miscarry before we see you again.

If you have had a miscarriage in the past you may choose to take progesterone medication if you are bleeding. This may prevent a small proportion of miscarriages. If this is the case, please call the nurse triage line or discuss this at your clinic appointment

### **How do I know if I am having a miscarriage?**

You will have bleeding, possibly heavy and with clots, as well as cramps or contraction-like pains.

### **What should I do if I am miscarrying?**

If the bleeding is too heavy to bear with clots and cramps, please go to your local Emergency Department (ED) or contact us on the numbers below, as you may need to have surgery to settle the bleeding. Unfortunately, there is nothing that can be done to stop a miscarriage at this stage.

You can take painkillers such as ibuprofen and/or paracetamol, to ease any pain and let the miscarriage happen naturally. You can still come for your check scan as planned. We will confirm that you have had a miscarriage and you can ask us any questions that you may have.

### **Who can I contact with queries and concerns?**

If you have any queries or concerns during working hours, contact the Early Pregnancy Unit:

#### **King's College Hospital site**

Tel: **020 3299 3168** (9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday)

Nurse Triage line, Tel: **020 3299 7232** (9am to 4.30pm,  
Monday to Friday)

Email: [Kch-tr.helplineepu@nhs.net](mailto:Kch-tr.helplineepu@nhs.net)

Women's Surgical Unit, Tel: **020 3299 5936** (out of hours)

### **Princess Royal University Hospital (PRUH) site**

Tel: **01689 865721** (9am to 4pm, Monday to Friday)

**In an emergency, please go to your local ED.**

### **More information?**

These websites have more information about ultrasound scans and the signs and symptoms of early pregnancy.

#### **The Miscarriage Association**

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

#### **The Association of Early Pregnancy Units**

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

### **Sharing your information**

We have teamed up with Guy's and St Thomas' Hospitals in a partnership known as King's Health Partners Academic Health Sciences Centre. We are working together to give our patients the best possible care, so you might find we invite you for appointments at Guy's or St Thomas'. To make sure everyone you meet always has the most up-to-date information about your health, we may share information about you between the hospitals.



## Care provided by students

We provide clinical training where our students get practical experience by treating patients. Please tell your doctor or nurse if you do not want students to be involved in your care. Your treatment will not be affected by your decision.

## PALS

The Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) is a service that offers support, information and assistance to patients, relatives and visitors. They can also provide help and advice if you have a concern or complaint that staff have not been able to resolve for you. They can also pass on praise or thanks to our teams.

PALS at King's College Hospital, Denmark Hill, London SE5 9RS

Tel: **020 3299 3601**

Email: **[kch-tr.palsdh@nhs.net](mailto:kch-tr.palsdh@nhs.net)**

PALS at Princess Royal University Hospital, Farnborough Common, Orpington, Kent BR6 8ND

Tel: **01689 863252**

Email: **[kch-tr.palspruh@nhs.net](mailto:kch-tr.palspruh@nhs.net)**

**If you would like the information in this leaflet in a different language or format, please contact our Communications and Interpreting telephone line on 020 3299 4826 or email [kch-tr.accessibility@nhs.net](mailto:kch-tr.accessibility@nhs.net)**



