

Early Pregnancy Assessment Unit (EPAU)

Management of pregnancy tissue – Information for patients

Losing a pregnancy is a very traumatic time and the subject of how the pregnancy tissue is handled is difficult to talk about. This leaflet aims to provide you with information about what happens following your miscarriage / ectopic pregnancy.

What does the tissue look like?

The tissue in these early losses most commonly looks like grey matter surrounded by a clot of blood. It is unusual to recognise any tissue that looks like a baby and the tissue is very small in amount and size.

What will happen to the tissue passed?

The normal procedure is for the tissue to be examined under a microscope for two reasons. Firstly to identify any pregnancy tissue and secondly, the examination will exclude any evidence of a Molar pregnancy, this is rare and occurs when the placenta grows quickly and produces excess amounts of pregnancy hormone. You will be asked to sign a consent form for this examination to take place.

What happens to the tissue after the examination?

All pregnancy tissue will be sensitively disposed of by way of communal burial in accordance with Trust guidelines.

Will the examination tell us anything about why I miscarried?

Unfortunately not. The examination of the tissue rarely provides any information to explain why the pregnancy was lost. The purpose of the examination is to confirm the presence of a pregnancy and exclude a molar pregnancy.



Patient Information

Can I make alternative arrangements?

The above procedure will take place unless you request that we do anything different. If there are alternative arrangements you would like to make, please ask to speak to the nurse in charge.

For further information please contact the EGU: 024 7696 7000

Reference:

Department of Health Disposal of Fetal Tissue HSG (91)19 London HMSO; 12 November 1991

Human Tissue Authority (HTA) (2015) Guidance on the disposal of pregnancy remains following pregnancy loss or termination

The Trust has access to interpreting and translation services. If you need this information in another language or format please contact 024 7696 7000 and we will do our best to meet your needs.

The Trust operates a smoke free policy

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