

## Gynaecology

# Miscarriage

Sadly, about one in four pregnancies end in a miscarriage. It is usually difficult to give a definite answer as to what caused the miscarriage.

It is extremely unlikely that anything you did caused your miscarriage. Do not blame yourself or anyone else. At this hospital we often see over 100 miscarriages a month.

About 80% of all miscarriages happen because of chromosome abnormalities. Only in a small number of women with recurrent (repeated) miscarriages can a definite cause be determined. However, these may be:

- hormonal irregularities
- immune problems
- infections causing high temperature or infections such as German measles which may directly affect the baby.
- structural problems with the cervix (neck of the womb) or the womb

## Investigation after a miscarriage

It is uncommon for us to find anything abnormal after one miscarriage. Most women will go on to have a healthy pregnancy after 1 or 2 miscarriages, without needing any tests. Because of this, we usually do not



## Patient Information

carry out investigations unless you have recurrent miscarriages (3 or more).

### **Becoming pregnant again**

The chances of becoming pregnant again after a spontaneous miscarriage, irrespective of whether the miscarriage was managed by conservative, medical or surgical treatment are just as good.

### **Will you miscarry again**

After 1 miscarriage, most women will go on to have a healthy pregnancy. If you live within the UHCW catchment area and have experienced 2 or more miscarriages, your GP can refer you to the Tommy's recurrent miscarriage clinic at UHCW for more tests and investigations.

If you live outside the area, please speak with your local hospital or clinic. (Tommy's contact details can be found on page 4).

### **How long to wait before trying for another baby**

You may try again when you feel ready. We advise that you wait until you have had a normal period, which you should have three to five weeks after a miscarriage, provided your periods were regular before.

However, it is best not to have sexual intercourse until the bleeding has completely stopped after the miscarriage.

### **For your next pregnancy**

Being as healthy as possible is a good idea moving forward.

- Stop smoking and try to keep your Body Mass Index (BMI) in the healthy range (between 19 and 25).
- Continue taking folic acid and vitamin D if you are planning to conceive soon.
- Make sure that any other health conditions (like diabetes or high blood pressure) are well controlled.
- Make sure your immunisations are up to date.

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- Once you are pregnant, if you have bleeding in early pregnancy (before 12 weeks), you may be offered progesterone.

Contact your nearest Early Pregnancy Unit to book an early pregnancy scan. Let them know you have had a previous miscarriage. After the scan, the Unit can start you on progesterone, and your GP can continue prescribing it until you reach 16 weeks (see Tommy's website for more information).

## Contraception

If you want to wait before trying for another baby, start any contraception as soon as possible.

Discuss this with your hospital doctor, GP, or family planning clinic.

## Follow-up appointments after the miscarriage

You will not always get a follow-up appointment to the clinic unless there is a specific reason.

If this is your second or subsequent miscarriage and you are not a patient of the recurrent miscarriage clinic (Tommy's clinic), your GP can refer you to Professor Quenby.

## How miscarriage affects you

The experience of miscarriage affects each woman and her partner differently. Some couples have very little effects, whereas others experience a sense of loss and grief, which may cause periods of crying and depression.

There is no set rule, and it is normal to feel these varying responses. Do not feel afraid to express your feelings and concerns. Give yourself and your body time to recover.

It may help to talk over things with your partner, friends, and other members of the family.

## Patient Information

If you would like to talk further support groups are available.

## Charities

The following charities can offer information and support:

### Tommy's charity

Phone: 0800 014 7800

Website: [www.tommys.org](http://www.tommys.org)

E-mail: [midwife@tommys.org](mailto:midwife@tommys.org)

Tommy's has created a **Wellbeing after Miscarriage programme** to support anyone who has had a loss before 24 weeks. This free online programme has been developed by experts to help with both physical and emotional wellbeing after miscarriage.

It includes 6 parts covering mental health, physiotherapy advice, exercise, and online peer support.

You can access the programme on Tommy's website: [www.tommys.org](http://www.tommys.org)

### The Miscarriage Association

01924 200799

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

E-mail: [info@miscarriageassociation.org.uk](mailto:info@miscarriageassociation.org.uk)

## Counselling

If you feel you need further support in the form of counselling, please contact either your GP or the Emergency Gynae Unit for contact details. Some GP practices have a counsellor attached to their surgery.

### Acorn Centre

The hospital can provide you with contact details for the Acorn Centre based in Nuneaton. If you have internet access you can access their

## Patient Information

website: [www.acorncentrewarks.org.uk](http://www.acorncentrewarks.org.uk). or you can contact them on 024 7638 1878.

### **Recording a memento**

Some couples feel that they would like a way of recording the existence of their pregnancy. There is a 'Book of Remembrance' kept in the hospital Faith Centre a few words can be written as a memento to your baby for a small fee.

There is also a yearly memorial service held in the Faith Centre to remember all the babies that have miscarried. Call the chaplaincy department on 024 7696 7515 for more information and support.

### **What to do you with your pregnancy if you pass it at home**

Some families choose to bury the pregnancy in a place of their choice. This must be in a biodegradable container at least 18 inches deep with permission of the landowner.

If you prefer to bring the pregnancy into the hospital, we can arrange for a monthly communal burial to happen.

If you wish for this to be done, please contact the Emergency Gynaecology Unit (EGU) on 024 7696 7000.

### **If you change your mind about burial options**

If you have any questions regarding burial or if you have changed your mind about your choice, please contact the Chaplaincy team directly on 024 7696 7515.

### **Contact details for support:**

024 7696 7000

EGU Manager: Anna Rudkin

EGU Clinical Nurse Specialist: Vicki Castle

## Patient Information

Early Pregnancy Clinical Nurse Specialist: Mandi Kirkman

Advanced Nurse Practitioner: Rachel Meadows

The Trust has access to interpreting and translation services. If you need this information in another language or format, please contact 024 7696 7243 and we will do our best to meet your needs.

The Trust operates a smoke-free policy.

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[www.uhcw.nhs.uk/feedback](http://www.uhcw.nhs.uk/feedback)



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