

## Obstetrics and Gynaecology

# Maternity Triage Services

### Introduction

The Maternity Triage Unit is situated next to the Labour Ward in the West Wing. The purpose of the Maternity Triage Unit is to assess women who are more than 22 weeks into their pregnancy as well as women who are 14 days post delivery who have an urgent clinical complaint relating to pregnancy and delivery.

Before you come to the Maternity Triage Unit, we request that, in the absence of an emergency, you telephone us first for advice;

### Maternity Triage 024 7696 7333

**If you are less than 22 weeks pregnant contact Ward 23 Tel: 024 7696 7222**

**If you have had your baby contact the post natal ward Tel: 024 7696 7315**

### What are the benefits of calling the Maternity Triage Unit first?

Your body will undergo many changes during pregnancy, some of which may be uncomfortable or inconvenient. Some of these changes may give you cause to be alarmed but it is rare that they are anything to be concerned about. Any concerns should be discussed with an appropriate health care professional. In the first instance this can often be your GP or community midwife. If you are concerned that something may be seriously wrong or you cannot get in touch with the GP or community midwife the Maternity Triage Unit can be contacted for advice and support.

### Contact the maternity triage unit if you have...

- **Severe headache** which has not been relieved by Paracetamol
- **Vaginal bleeding** that is **not mucus or sticky**
- **Severe itching** on the palms of your hands or soles of your feet
- **Painful, swollen, hot, tender, red skin** particularly at the back of your leg below your knee
- If you think you may be experiencing regular painful contractions **before** you are 37 weeks pregnant
- **Experiencing regular painful contractions every 5 minutes lasting 60 seconds for more than 2 hours**, after 37 weeks pregnant
- If you think your **waters** may have **broken**
- **Any** concerns about your baby's **movements**
- **Constant, abdominal pain**
- **Feeling unwell with a fever**
- **Postnatal concerns**



## Patient Information

### **What will happen when I call?**

When you contact the Maternity Triage Unit, a midwife will listen to your concerns and gain relevant information regarding your personal circumstances. This will guide the midwife to assess whether you need to attend hospital or if it would be more appropriate for you to contact your GP. If you arrive at the hospital without first contacting The Maternity Triage Unit, a midwife may advise you that it would more appropriate for you to go home and arrange a doctor's appointment at their earliest convenience.

### **What will happen if I am advised to come to hospital?**

The midwife on the telephone will advise you to bring your green pregnancy held notes and an overnight bag, including any medications that you may be taking. You will need to register at the maternity reception desk which is located in the West Wing entrance at UHCW. This enables a patient identification band and your hospital notes to be issued.

At this point you will then be directed to the Labour Ward reception area, who will inform Triage that you have arrived.

On arrival to the Maternity Triage Unit a midwife will introduce themselves and welcome you to the Unit. The midwife will prioritise your clinical condition based upon both yours and your baby's needs, not on the order you arrived into the Unit. Unfortunately at certain times this may result in you having to wait for a triage assessment, but we will endeavour to see you as soon as possible. Once you have had an initial triage assessment you may be asked to return to the waiting area to await further treatment. This only occurs if the Unit is busy and your condition allows for this.

### **The following are common minor pregnancy problems and you should seek advice from your GP**

- Backache and pelvic joint pain
- Constipation
- Feeling faint
- Headaches (without visual problems)
- Incontinence or increased frequency passing urine
- General itching
- Nose bleeds
- Swollen ankles, fingers and feet
- Vaginal discharge
- Varicose veins

### **Some simple solutions to minor pregnancy ailments**

#### **Backache and pelvic joint pain**

- Avoid heavy lifting
- Wear flat shoes
- Sit with a straight back
- Ensure adequate rest
- Your GP can prescribe a support corset for you if it is very painful
- Use of a birthing ball can improve posture
- Referral to a physiotherapist if required

# Patient Information

## Constipation

- Eat plenty of fresh fruit and vegetables.
- Increase your fibre intake.
- Take regular exercise
- Drink plenty of water
- If iron tablets have been prescribed they may possibly need changing. Discuss with your midwife and/or GP

## Feeling faint

- Rise slowly after sitting or lying down
- Lie on your side in bed as it is much better for you not to lie flat on your back

## Headaches

- Rest and relaxation
- A brisk walk in the fresh air
- Drink plenty of water and avoid dehydration
- Take Paracetamol as required and follow the instructions on the packet

## Incontinence and frequency passing urine

- Carry out pelvic floor exercises(if unsure how to do these discuss with your midwife and/or GP)
- Drink plenty of fluids during the day.
- Rocking backwards and forwards during urination allows full emptying of the bladder therefore will reduce your visits to the toilet
- If you experience burning or stinging when you pass urine this may indicate that you may have an urine infection so contact your GP for an appointment as soon as possible

## General itching

- Wear loose cotton clothing
- Moisturise dry skin daily
- If itching is severe contact your GP

## Nose bleeds

- Press the sides of your nose, below the bony part, between your thumb and finger for at least ten minutes. If necessary repeat.

## Swollen ankles, fingers and feet

- Avoid standing for long periods
- Wear flat, comfortable shoes
- When sitting, rest with your feet elevated on a stool

## Vaginal discharge

- Clear or white increased vaginal discharge is normal
- If you have a coloured, smelly discharge which is itchy and/or sore this may indicate you have an infection and you should contact your GP

## Varicose veins

- Avoid crossing your legs and standing for long periods

## Patient Information

- Rest your legs as much as possible with your legs elevated
- Perform regular leg and ankle exercises. Discuss these with your midwife
- Support stockings can be purchased from pharmacies to relieve the discomfort caused by varicose veins

### Further information

If you require any information please contact us:

**Maternity Triage: 024 7696 7333**

**Ward 23: 024 7696 7333**

**Post Natal Ward: 024 7696 7315**

**Community Midwifery Office** 8.30 am – 4.30 pm: 024 7696 7424

**NHS Direct** 0845 4647

<http://www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk/>

Write your GP's telephone number here:

**My GPs telephone number is:**

The Trust has access to interpreting and translation services. If you need this information in another language or format please contact 024 7696 7333 and we will do our best to meet your needs.

The Trust operates a smoke free policy

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