



York and Scarborough  
Teaching Hospitals  
NHS Foundation Trust

# **Early pregnancy assessment Pregnancy of unknown location**

An explanation for patients

## **Early Pregnancy Assessment Unit (EPAU)**

① For more information, please contact:

York Hospital, Wigginton Road, York, YO31 8HE or  
telephone 01904 726489

Or

Scarborough Hospital, Woodlands Drive, Scarborough,  
YO12 6QL or telephone 01723 385134

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The ultrasound you have had today has not shown a pregnancy, but your urine test for pregnancy was positive.

## **What does this mean?**

There are three possible explanations, one of which will apply to you:

1. You may have had a complete miscarriage, but the pregnancy test has not yet had time to become negative.
2. You have a very early pregnancy that at present is too small to show up on a scan.
3. You may have a pregnancy developing outside the womb (ectopic pregnancy), which is not showing up on the scan. At this stage, it cannot be excluded and may be too early to diagnose.

## **What happens next?**

We will arrange for you to have a blood test today. This will let us start to monitor the level of pregnancy hormone in your blood. We will record your blood pressure, pulse, temperature, and oxygen levels. If these are all within normal limits, you will be allowed to go home. We will also make you an appointment to return for another blood test in two days' time. This will let us see if your hormone level is rising or falling.

If the nurse has any concerns about your symptoms or observations, she may ask a doctor to come and see you before sending you home.

After the second blood test, you have the option of waiting for the result or going home and being contacted by phone.

## **What happens if my hormone level goes up after the second blood test?**

If your hormone level goes up by about two-thirds (63%) or more it is likely, but not guaranteed, that you have a very early pregnancy. The nurse will make you an appointment to come back for another scan at a later date, this is usually in two weeks' time, but if your hormone level is very high, it may be one week.

## **What happens if my hormone level goes down after the second blood test?**

If your hormone level drops by half (50%) or more, it is likely, but not guaranteed, that you have had a complete miscarriage. This means that all the pregnancy has been passed. Usually, your symptoms would be light vaginal bleeding over the next few days, eventually stopping. You would not require any other medical intervention.

We will arrange a date for you to do a home pregnancy test, or hospital appointment if you would prefer. If the test is negative and you are no longer bleeding, there will be no further follow up. If the test is still positive or you are still bleeding, you can contact the clinic (on the number on the front of the leaflet) and we will arrange to see you for further assessment.

## **What if my hormone levels do not rise or fall significantly after the second blood test?**

Whilst monitoring your hormone levels is helpful, it only forms part of your assessment and not all patients will follow the same pathway. If your hormone levels do not fall into one of the two groups above, we may ask you to come back to see and be examined by the doctor if required. This will allow the doctor to make an assessment and then plan your care. They will explain to you what follow up is required.

## **What happens if I do not feel well at home whilst waiting for my next appointment?**

Between any appointments, if you are concerned about your symptoms or have any questions you can contact us directly.

- York EPAU  
Telephone 01904 726489  
Monday to Sunday, 8am to 2.30pm
- York Gynaecology Assessment Unit (GAU)  
Telephone 01904 726275  
8.15am to 7.30pm (Use this number for out of hours enquiries)
- Scarborough EPAU  
Telephone (24 hours) 01723 385134

Your notes will be kept on the unit between appointments so we can advise you appropriately.

## **Tell us what you think of this leaflet**

We hope that you found this leaflet helpful. If you would like to tell us what you think, please contact:

V. Hughes, Women's Unit Deputy Manager,  
York Hospital, Wigginton Road, York, YO31 8HE or  
Telephone 01904 726489.

## **Teaching, training and research**

Our Trust is committed to teaching, training and research to support the development of health and healthcare in our community. Healthcare students may observe consultations for this purpose. You can opt out if you do not want students to observe. We may also ask you if you would like to be involved in our research.

## **Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)**

PALS offers impartial advice and assistance to patients, their relatives, friends and carers. We can listen to feedback (positive or negative), answer questions and help resolve any concerns about Trust services.

PALS can be contacted on 01904 726262, or email [yhs-tr.patientexperienceteam@nhs.net](mailto:yhs-tr.patientexperienceteam@nhs.net).

An answer phone is available out of hours.

# Leaflets in alternative languages or formats

If you would like this information in a different format, including braille or easy read, or translated into a different language, please speak to a member of staff in the ward or department providing your care.

Patient Information Leaflets can be accessed via the Trust's Patient Information Leaflet website:

[www.yorkhospitals.nhs.uk/your-visit/patient-information-leaflets/](http://www.yorkhospitals.nhs.uk/your-visit/patient-information-leaflets/)

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