

## Positive pregnancy test with scan showing your womb as empty

### Why did your scan show an empty womb?

In early pregnancy some women might experience some bleeding and a scan may not show exactly what is happening for a few reasons:

- It is simply too early to see the pregnancy; or
- The pregnancy is not growing as it should; this is possibly the reason why you started bleeding and could go on to miscarry; or
- There is a possibility of an ectopic pregnancy (a pregnancy outside the womb) and this occurs in approximately 10-15 women out of 100 in these circumstances.

### How are we going to find out what is happening with your pregnancy?

To help us find out what is happening we need to check the pregnancy hormone level (BhCG - Beta-human chorionic gonadotrophin) and the progesterone level in your blood. BhCG levels roughly double every two days in a normally growing early pregnancy.

Depending on the results, we might repeat the BhCG blood tests after 48 hours or one week. We may need to perform another ultrasound scan in a few days.

- In 3 out of 10 patients a healthy pregnancy is diagnosed by ultrasound.
- In 5-7 out of 10 women the cause of the scan showing an empty uterus may be an early miscarriage and the pregnancy hormone will become negative in 2-3 weeks time.
- In 1 out of 10 patients an ectopic pregnancy is found (the pregnancy is outside the womb, it may be in the fallopian tube).

### What are the symptoms you need to look out for?

Bleeding can be very common providing it is not too heavy (for example heavier than a period) you can stay at home.

If you develop any type of abdominal pain or have increasing possibly cramp discomfort, you may take paracetamol tablets.

However, if the pain is sharp and specific to one side; if you have pain in the tip of your shoulder; if you feel faint; or the vaginal bleeding is getting worse, please phone the Early Pregnancy Unit (EPU) or attend A&E at Stoke Mandeville Hospital as an ectopic pregnancy could be the cause.

## Useful Contact Numbers

### Stoke Mandeville Hospital

Early Pregnancy Unit 01296 316469 (please note this is a voicemail where callers can leave a message)

Surgical Assessment Unit (SAU) 01296 316500

### Out of hours

Ward 15 01296 416500

### Further help

*The Miscarriage Association*

c/o Clayton Hospital, Northgate,  
Wakefield, West Yorkshire WF1 3JS

Tel: (Helpline) 01924 200799

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

## How can you help reduce healthcare associated infections?

Infection prevention and control is important to the well-being of our patients and for that reason we have infection prevention and control procedures in place. Keeping your hands clean is an effective way of preventing the spread of infections.

If you need advice or further assistance, please contact our patient advice and liaison service (PALS): call 01296 831120 or email [bht.pals@nhs.net](mailto:bht.pals@nhs.net)

This leaflet explains some of the most common side-effects that some women may experience. However, it is not comprehensive. If you experience other side-effects and want to ask anything else related to your treatment, please speak to the EPU clinic or the Surgical Assessment Unit

## Division of Women, Children & Sexual Health Services

### Approvals:

*Gynae/Maternity Guidelines Group: V2 November 2010, V3 Aug 2015, V4 16.4.19, V5 May 2022/Aug 2023*

*Divisional Board/SDU: V2 Dec 2010, V3 Feb 2016, V4 May 2019, V5 Oct 2022*

*Clinical Guidelines Subgroup: not required*

*BMV/Public input: July 2011, V3 Lay Reps Sep 2015*

*Equality Impact Assessment: V2 February 2011, V3 Feb 2016, V5 Aug 2022*

*Communications Advisory Panel: V2 June 2012, V3 May 2016, V5 Oct 2023*