



**HUTT maternity**

Hutt Valley Maternity Care

**Pain and bleeding in  
Early Pregnancy**  
Information for women

There are a number of possible causes for pain and bleeding in early pregnancy:

- Implantation bleeding – when the fertilized egg implants in the uterus lining, this can cause some cramping or light bleeding
- The cervix (the neck of the uterus) is more prone to bleeding during pregnancy because of the increased blood flow to this part of your body
- Ectopic pregnancy (a pregnancy in the fallopian tube)
- Miscarriage

In order to find out why you may have bleeding or pain, you need to have some tests done, and assessed with the results.

### **What tests will I have?**

You may have:

- An Ultrasound scan, so that images of your uterus can be seen. Often it will be necessary to insert a small ultrasound probe into your vagina for better images.
- A blood test to measure the level of pregnancy hormone (BhCG)
- A vaginal examination

### **After the tests?**

The images from the ultrasound scan, along with other tests will help the staff to know what is happening. The tests might show one of the following:

- Your pregnancy is developing normally, no cause of your pain or bleeding has been found
- You have had, or are in the process of having, a miscarriage
- Your pregnancy could not be found. This means that your blood test showed a high level of pregnancy hormone, but the ultrasound could not find a pregnancy. This could mean that you are pregnant but the pregnancy is still too small to be seen, that you have already miscarried, or that you may have an ectopic pregnancy. An ectopic pregnancy is when the pregnancy has implanted in your fallopian tube instead of the uterus. This is a very serious condition, and you will be monitored very closely over the next few days
- A pregnancy sac was found in your uterus, but an embryo could not be seen clearly in the sac. Again this might be because it is too early in the pregnancy and the embryo is just too small to be seen.

### **What happens now?**

If your tests were inconclusive you will need to be tested again within the next few days. Try and relax at home and use your usual methods of pain relief as you need to. You can take Panadol or Panadeine as per the instructions on the packet.

You can contact the Maternity Assessment Unit, Monday to Friday, 0900 – 1600 on 587 2652, or go straight to the Emergency Department if you experience:

- Heavy bleeding
- Extreme abdominal pain
- Fever or chills
- Unusual smelling vaginal discharge

If the assessment shows that you are having a miscarriage, the staff will talk with you about a plan for your ongoing care. There is no treatment available to prevent miscarriage once it has started. Treatment is aimed at ensuring that there is the least possible trauma for you as well as avoiding heavy bleeding and infection. You should have the opportunity to take part in the decision about your care.

Further information:

- Early Pregnancy Loss, Patient Information, Maternity Assessment Unit
- SANDS - Catherine Maetzig 027-6647718 or sandswgtnhutt@gmail.com
- A Guide to Coping with Miscarriage, Wellington Miscarriage Support Group
- Your Midwife or GP

Maternity Assessment Unit  
Ground Floor, Heretaunga Block, Hutt Hospital  
(04) 587 2652, (Mon-Fri 0830-1600)