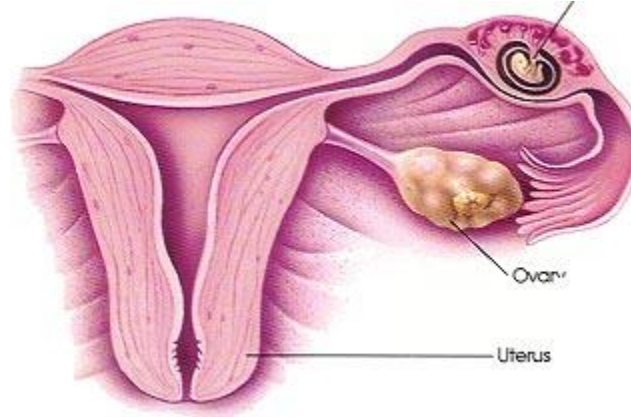


Ectopic Pregnancy

What is an ectopic pregnancy?

- An Ectopic pregnancy occurs when a fertilized egg (embryo) grows outside of the uterus. Most ectopic pregnancies happen in the fallopian tube, but they can also rarely occur in the ovary, the abdomen or the cervix. The embryo cannot continue to grow outside of the uterus and live until birth.



Symptoms of an ectopic pregnancy can include: (usually occurs 6-8 weeks after last menstrual period)

- Bleeding
- Cramping on one side of the pelvis
- Pelvic pain
 - Not all pregnant patients who have pain or bleeding have an ectopic pregnancy. You will need additional tests.

Tests needed

- You will likely need one or more blood tests to check the hormone level produced by the pregnancy. The test is called a Quant or Beta-HCG (same test).
- You will also need an ultrasound. The time to do the ultrasound will depend on the level of the Quant/Beta-HCG or how far along you are in the pregnancy.
 - If the hormone level is high enough your doctor will expect to see a gestational sac (the place baby develops) in the uterus when the ultrasound is done. If the ultrasound does not show the pregnancy in the uterus, it likely means that it is in the fallopian tube. Your doctor will review all of this with you.

Treatment of an ectopic pregnancy

- The doctor will explain the medical and surgical choices to you. If left alone (no treatment), an ectopic pregnancy can rupture and create pain and internal bleeding, and even death.

Other risks

- Even if you have been treated for an ectopic pregnancy, there is always a small risk of severe internal bleeding.
- **You should go the Emergency Department if:**
 - You suddenly feel faint or like passing out
 - You suddenly have severe pain at the top of your shoulder or your abdomen
 - Heavy vaginal bleeding- More than one large pad an hour for more than 2 hours

Follow up

- **The doctor will need to continue to monitor your blood hormone levels until the result is negative. This may take several weeks. It is very important to keep these appointments/lab draws.**
- You should discuss when it is okay to try and get pregnant again with your doctor. Generally, once your hormone level is negative and you have had one or two normal periods afterwards it is safe to begin trying to get pregnant again.
- **Please contact our office with any questions:**
 - Call 402-559-4500 (Mon-Fri 8 am-4:30 pm) After hours call to 402-559-4500

Ectopic Pregnancy Treatment with Methotrexate

- Methotrexate is a drug used to treat ectopic pregnancies and certain types of pain and cancer. It works by stopping the growth of the pregnancy cells.
- The medication is given as an injection into your muscle. You will go home afterwards and in most cases a single dose is all you will need.
- **Possible Side effects:**
 - Nausea and vomiting
 - Sores in the mouth (rare)
 - Vaginal spotting or bleeding
 - Abdominal or pelvic pain occurring 3-7 days after injection
 - Pain should not be severe and should get better with Acetaminophen (Tylenol).
 - Can affect liver and kidney function. Your doctor will need to test these before you can get the medication
 - May sunburn more easily
- **Things to avoid:**
 - No sexual intercourse until your doctor clears you for this
 - Avoid using tampons for 2-3 weeks
 - Stop the following medications: Aspirin, penicillin, and sulfa
 - Do not take vitamins containing folic acid- prenatal vitamins (can prevent Methotrexate from working)
 - Avoid gas producing foods (in order to distinguish type of pain and decrease bloating)
 - Wear sunscreen (SPF 30+) and stay out of direct sunlight
 - Do not breast feed
 - Avoid trauma to your abdomen (i.e. contact sports)
 - Do not drink alcohol
- **Things to do:**
 - Drink increased amounts of fluids (8-12 cups a day)
- **What to expect after treatment:**
 - About 2-7 days after you get the methotrexate, you will probably have cramping pain in your lower abdomen. This may last up to 12 hours.
 - You will have vaginal bleeding that may last a few days to a few weeks. This bleeding is often light or like a period.
 - Your doctor will continue to monitor your blood hormone levels with blood draws
- **Contact our office (402-559-4500) with any of the following:**
 - Any foul smelling drainage coming from your vagina
 - Develop a fever, a temperature of 101 degrees or higher
 - If you are so sick to your stomach that you cannot eat or drink for more than 24 hours
 - If for any reason you are unable to keep your next doctor's appointment or lab draw
- **You should go the Emergency Department if:**
 - You suddenly feel faint or like passing out
 - You suddenly have severe pain at the top of your shoulder or your abdomen
 - Heavy vaginal bleeding - More than one large pad an hour for more than 2 hours