



Early Pregnancy Assessment Clinic (EPAC)

Bleeding in Early Pregnancy

Bleeding from the vagina in pregnancy will naturally cause some concern. When you are reassured that the pregnancy is ongoing, you may wish to take things easy and refrain from intercourse until the bleeding has settled (usually after a few days).

If the bleeding becomes heavier, prolonged or painful please contact your GP or go to the Emergency Department.

Common causes for bleeding in early pregnancy

The exact cause of bleeding in pregnancy may not always be known. Below are some common causes:-

Implantation Bleeding

Implantation is when the fertilised egg starts to attach to the lining of the uterus (womb). This process can cause a few local blood cells to be disturbed which can shed through the vagina (it has been likened to roots growing in the soil). Eventually the placenta will establish here. The bleeding usually settles after a few days. Many women may not even be aware that they are pregnant.

Cervical Erosion (Ectropia)

This is where the epithelium (cells) inside the cervix (neck of the womb) protrudes through the opening (the os). This can be due to increased levels of hormones produced during pregnancy or can occur if there has been any treatment to the cervix in the past. It may cause a discharge from the vagina, or even a gush of bright red blood, and may happen after intercourse.

Polyps

Polyps are small benign growths which may cause bleeding. They can occur with cervical erosion and can normally be seen and diagnosed by speculum examination. They are not harmful and treatment would not be generally recommended in pregnancy.

Further Information

If you have any concerns please call on the number below.

Please be aware that 'out of clinic hours' the phone is transferred to the Maternity Unit.

Tel: 01305 255760

About this leaflet:

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If you have feedback regarding the accuracy of the information contained in this leaflet, or if you would like a list of references used to develop this leaflet, please email pals@dchft.nhs.uk



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