

## Advice for women with bleeding or pain in early pregnancy

You have come to the Emergency Department after some pain and/or bleeding and may be worried. After assessing you today the doctor has decided that you are well enough to go home.

Most women who have bleeding in the early stages of pregnancy go on to have completely normal pregnancies. However, a small proportion of women will go on to have a miscarriage. It is important for you to know that it is not your fault and that there is very little that you can do to change the outcome. We have arranged a scan and an appointment on the Early Pregnancy Assessment Unit, where the staff will be able to tell you what is happening.

### Early Pregnancy Assessment Unit (EPAU)

An appointment has been made for you to come to the Early Pregnancy Assessment Unit (EPAU) on \_\_\_\_\_ day \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_.

You will need to arrive on ward 20 [zone B, location B16] at Airedale Hospital at \_\_\_\_\_:\_\_\_\_\_. You can eat and drink as normal, but **you need to have a full bladder when you arrive**. We suggest you drink some water (about 1 pint or 500ml) about an hour before your appointment.

If your appointment is on Sunday, you should go straight to the Ultrasound Department, part of the Radiology Department [zone A, location A14], instead of ward 20.

Please bring an early morning urine specimen with you, as well as an overnight bag in case you need to stay in hospital. The Emergency Department staff should have given you a copy of your notes in an envelope to bring as well – please make sure you have this before leaving the Emergency Department. You can expect to be at the hospital most of the morning, so it might be a good idea to bring something to read.

A nurse and/or doctor will go through your medical history with you and discuss your pregnancy so far. You may have some blood tests taken and an ultrasound scan will usually be performed. In very early pregnancy it is sometimes necessary to do the scan via the vagina because the foetus is too small to see through the abdomen.

In the meantime you should speak to your midwife or GP, or return to the Emergency Department, if you get the following:

- Heavy bleeding
- Worsening pain (despite taking paracetamol)
- Pain getting worse on one side of your abdomen (tummy) rather than the other
- Pain going to a shoulder
- Fainting or collapsing

## Please read on for advice from The NHS website about general health in pregnancy

### Alcohol in pregnancy

Experts are still unsure exactly how much, if any, alcohol is completely safe for you to have while you're pregnant, so the safest approach is not to drink at all while you're expecting.

Drinking in pregnancy can lead to long-term harm to the baby, with the more you drink the greater the risk.

### How does alcohol affect my unborn baby?

When you drink, alcohol passes from your blood through the placenta and to your baby. A baby's liver is one of the last organs to develop and doesn't mature until the latter stages of pregnancy. Your baby cannot process alcohol as well as you can, and too much exposure to alcohol can seriously affect their development.

Drinking alcohol in early pregnancy increases the risk of premature birth, low birth-weight and facial abnormalities.

Should you choose to drink after the first three months of your pregnancy, consuming alcohol carries risks of affecting your baby after they're born. The risks are greater the more you drink. The effects include learning difficulties and behavioural problems.

### Folic acid before and during pregnancy

Folic acid is important for pregnancy, as it can help to prevent birth defects known as neural tube defects, including spina bifida. You should take a 400mcg folic acid tablet every day while you are trying to get pregnant and until you are 12 weeks pregnant. If you didn't take folic acid before you conceived, you should start as soon as you find out that you are pregnant.

### Smoking and your unborn baby

Protecting your baby from tobacco smoke is one of the best things you can do to give your child a healthy start in life. It can be difficult to stop smoking, but it's never too late to quit.

Every cigarette you smoke contains over 4,000 chemicals, so smoking when you are pregnant harms your unborn baby. Cigarettes can restrict the essential oxygen supply to your baby. As a result, their heart has to beat harder every time you smoke.

Smoking in pregnancy increases the risk of still birth and premature birth. Babies of women who smoke are more likely to have a low birth weight and difficulties keeping warm, feeding and breathing after birth. They are more prone to infections and to cot death (also known as Sudden Infant Death Syndrome).

**More information about pregnancy and health is available on the NHS choices website:**

<http://www.nhs.uk/Conditions/pregnancy-and-baby/pages/pregnancy-and-baby-care.aspx>

**For more information contact:**

- Emergency Department 01535 294481
- Emergency Department appointments 01535 294482
- Early Pregnancy Assessment Unit 01535 295095 (0830-1630 Monday-Friday)
- NHS 111 111, or 111.nhs.uk
- The NHS website [www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk)

**Notes:**

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**Are you a victim of Domestic Violence? For confidential advice, contact:**

Bradford	0808 2800 999	<a href="https://www.stayingput.uk.net/contact">https://www.stayingput.uk.net/contact</a>
North Yorkshire	03000 110 110	<a href="https://www.idas.org.uk/">https://www.idas.org.uk/</a>
Lancashire	0300 323 0085	<a href="https://www.lancashire.gov.uk/health-and-social-care/your-health-and-wellbeing/domestic-abuse/">https://www.lancashire.gov.uk/health-and-social-care/your-health-and-wellbeing/domestic-abuse/</a>

If you require this leaflet in other languages or formats please telephone the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) on 01535 294019

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