



**East Lancashire Hospitals**

**NHS Trust**

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**Pennine Lancashire**

## **Discharge Information**

# **Laparoscopy for ectopic pregnancy.**

**Safe | Personal | Effective**

We are very sorry you have experienced an ectopic pregnancy and we understand that this will be a difficult time for you. In addition to the emotional support information in your discharge information pack it is important you also understand the common symptoms you may experience after your operation. Please remember everyone's recovery is different and should you have any questions please contact the Gynaecology and Breastcare ward or the Early Pregnancy Assessment Unit

### **What can I expect after my operation?**

- Discomfort/Pain

It is normal to expect some mild abdominal, leg or shoulder-tip pain after your operation. We advise regular pain relief following surgery and you may have been prescribed some pain relief to take home. Your nurse will explain what they are and how often to take them. If you were not given any pain relief on discharge please use over the counter pain relief, such as paracetamol 1g or ibuprofen 400mg, always read the label/instructions before taking them.

Wind pain/bloating is also a common problem experienced by women following a laparoscopy, due to the gas put into the abdomen. Use of a heat pack or drinking peppermint tea can help, together with keeping mobile.

- Vaginal bleeding

It is common to have some vaginal bleeding for up to two weeks after your operation, sometimes you can have a heavy period type loss with small clots. Do not use tampons during this period, only sanitary towels. Tampons may increase your risk of developing an infection. If you feel your bleeding is very heavy, prolonged or has an offensive smell, please seek advice from your GP or contact the Early pregnancy Assessment Unit.

- Wounds

Your wounds will normally be closed with a very small suture (stitch). Sutures will usually dissolve within 10-14 days. If they do not and are causing discomfort, please seek advice from your GP or Practice Nurse who may be able to remove them for you. You may notice some oozing from the wounds and after 4 days they should be left exposed and kept clean and dry. If the oozing continues and/or the areas become red, inflamed or smelly, please seek advice from your GP, as you may have developed a mild infection. Always make sure you wash your hands before and after caring for your wounds. You may bathe and/or shower as normal - it does not matter if you get the sutures wet. However, please ensure that you lightly dab the wound dry with a clean towel afterwards. The incisions made during laparoscopy are very small and the scars will barely be visible after a few months.

### **When can I return to my normal activities?**

This information is only to be used as a guide for your recovery from the operation. Recovery will be specific to you as an individual.

It is normal to feel tired for a few days after your operation, and you may need to rest.

- **Work**

Physically you can normally return to work within 7-10 days. Most workplaces allow you to self-certify for up to 7 days. We understand that following pregnancy loss you may feel you need longer to recover both physically and psychologically and therefore should you require a sick note please discuss this with the team looking after you or your GP.

- **Exercise and Lifting**

Avoid heavy lifting, housework, and strenuous exercise for 7-10 days. After this time you should be able to ease yourself gently back into your exercise programme. You must not go swimming until your wounds have healed and any vaginal discharge has stopped.

- **Driving**

You must not drive after the operation for at least 48 hours and only then when you feel comfortable wearing a seatbelt and can perform an emergency stop without any abdominal discomfort. Please contact your insurance company for confirmation.

- **Sexual Intercourse**

Do not resume having sexual intercourse until any vaginal bleeding has stopped and you feel ready and comfortable to do so. It may take a while before you and your partner feel ready – this is completely normal. If you do not want to become pregnant, seek further advice from your nurse, doctor or family planning clinic regarding suitable contraception for you and your partner.

- **When can I expect a period?**

Every woman is different regarding how soon after the operation to expect a period, however sometime in the next 6 weeks is considered usual. Often this first period may be heavier or lighter than normal, but should return to normal within 2-3 cycles

### **Will I need a follow-up appointment?**

This will depend on the type of surgery performed and the outcome. You may need to attend the hospital for further blood tests. This will be discussed with you and arranged before discharge from the ward.

**You must complete a urine pregnancy test 3 weeks after discharge and inform the early pregnancy unit if this test is positive.**

You do not need to be worried if the pregnancy test is still positive, however this indicates you need some further assessments with the early pregnancy assessment team.

### **How does it affect future pregnancies?**

For most women an ectopic pregnancy occurs as a 'one off' event and does not occur again. The chance of having a successful pregnancy in the future is good. Studies show that even if you only have one fallopian tube, your chance of conceiving is only slightly reduced. It is perfectly safe to start trying for another pregnancy once you and your partner feel ready to and you have at least one normal period. In future pregnancy if you are otherwise well, we would advise you contact the ultrasound booking line for Early Pregnancy Assessment Unit on 01282 803185 and leave your details on the voicemail system, we will then call you back within 7 days to arrange an early ultrasound scan for you at approximately 6 weeks to ensure the pregnancy is in the womb.

Any preconception care should include:

- Taking folic acid.
- Reducing your alcohol and caffeine intake.
- Stopping smoking.

If you are unsure whether you wish to try for a future pregnancy, advice regarding contraception can be sought from your doctor or family planning clinic.

### **Emotions and Support**

Reaction to a pregnancy loss is very variable and in addition to the grief you may feel, your body will be undergoing lots of hormonal changes. It is completely normal to feel a variety of emotions during this time, and it may take time for you to recover. We are all different and we all react and recover in different ways - there is no right or wrong way. All of these feelings are normal and a part of processing your experiences. The feelings of low mood usually ease with time, talking about your feelings with friends and relatives can help considerably. If after 6 weeks you feel you cannot return to your normal daily activities, we would recommend you seek further support through your G.P, support groups or charities such as The Ectopic Pregnancy Trust although it is important to know you can access support sooner if you feel you need it. The available support group information will have been provided to you in your discharge pack.

### **Support Services following Pregnancy loss.**

There are several organisations locally and nationally which provide ongoing support to anyone experiencing pregnancy loss. These are listed below, please remember you can also discuss the requirement for ongoing psychological support with your GP.

#### **Lancashire Family Wellbeing Service:**

This service aims to support mental health through trauma, loss and bereavement related to pregnancy. You can self-refer to this service online or by phone

**[www.lancashirewomen.org](http://www.lancashirewomen.org) Tel: 0300 330 1354**

**The Miscarriage Association:** aim to give support and information to bereaved parents who have been affected by miscarriage, molar pregnancy or ectopic pregnancy.

**[www.miscarriageassociation.org.uk](http://www.miscarriageassociation.org.uk) Tel: 01924 200799**

**Children of Jannah:** supporting bereaved parents who hold at their core the Muslim belief that all children who die enter Heaven (called Jannah in Arabic). This belief is the guiding light that helps them to provide support through a faith perspective and education to thousands of families in the UK and beyond, who have been affected by the tragic loss of a child.

**[www.childrenofjannah.com](http://www.childrenofjannah.com)**

**The Ectopic Pregnancy Trust:** is a charity which provides information and support following the diagnosis of an ectopic pregnancy.

**<https://ectopic.org.uk/> Tel: 020 7733265**

### **Who can I speak to if I have any questions?**

If you have any questions about any information in this leaflet, please do not hesitate to ask the nurse who is caring for you. Or you may wish to contact some of our health professionals from the Early Pregnancy Unit (EPAU) or Gynaecology Ward team.

#### **Contact us:**

Early Pregnancy (EPAU): 01282 804268.

Gynaecology ward: 01282 804014 – open 24 hours

If you require this document in an alternative format or language, please contact

[Familycarequality.safetymteam@elht.nhs.uk](mailto:Familycarequality.safetymteam@elht.nhs.uk)

**Polish**

W celu otrzymania tego dokumentu w innym formacie lub języku, prosimy o kontakt z

**Punjabi**

ਜੇ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਇਸ ਦਸਤਾਵੇਜ਼ ਨੂੰ ਕਿਸੇ ਵਿਕਲਪਿਕ ਫਾਰਮੈਟ ਜਾਂ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਵਿੱਚ ਲੈਣੀ ਚਾਹੁੰਦੇ ਹੋ, ਤਾਂ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਸੰਪਰਕ ਕਰੋ

**Urdu**

اگر آپ کو اس دستاویز کی ایک متبادل شکل (فارمیٹ) یا زبان میں ضرورت ہے تو براہ مہربانی رابطہ کریں

**Bengali**

আপনি যদি এই প্রচারপত্রটি অন্য কোন আকারে বা অন্য ভাষায় চান, তাহলে যোগাযোগ করবেন

**Romanian**

Dacă aveți nevoie de acest document într-un format sau limbă alternativă, vă rugăm să contactați

**Lithuanian**

Norint gauti šį dokumentą kitu formatu ar kita kalba, prašome susisiekti su mumis

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