



Information for Patients

Obstetric Triage Department

(0161) 276 6567

About the Obstetric Triage Department (referred to as 'Triage')

Saint Mary's Obstetric Triage Department provides an **emergency assessment service** from 20 weeks of pregnancy, up to 28 days following the birth of your baby. The service is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. At times the Triage Unit is very busy, which can cause delays in you been seen. We aim to see you and triage you as soon as you attend the unit to determine whether you or your baby require immediate care and treatment. You may then have to wait, depending on the type of treatment you require and how busy the unit is.

This information sheet will provide you with further information about some of the reasons you may need to contact Triage and what to expect when you visit us.

Whilst the majority of pregnancies will progress without complications, many women experience problems which they feel they would like support or further information for. In addition to providing information on when and how to contact Triage, we include some suggestions for other services which may be helpful.

Always call Triage before coming so that the midwife can advise you whether or not you need to attend.

Remember to consider how you will get to the hospital, if required, during your pregnancy. **Please note: Ambulances are for emergencies.** If you call an ambulance, you may be taken to your nearest hospital, even if you are booked at Saint Mary's.



Please have your green hand held pregnancy notes to hand when you call, as we may ask you to provide information from them.



When to contact Triage

The Obstetric Triage department sees pregnant women from 20 weeks of pregnancy onwards. Before 20 weeks, you should contact the Emergency Gynaecology Unit on (0161) 276 6204 for advice.

Some of the reasons to contact Triage:

- **If you think you are in labour** (either premature labour, or at the end of your pregnancy). Labour is different for every woman, but commonly starts with your waters breaking or contractions. If you think you are going into labour before 37 weeks of pregnancy you should call Triage immediately for advice. Your community midwife will discuss signs of labour/when to call Triage towards your due date.
- **If you think your waters have broken.** Waters breaking (or membrane rupture) is common during, or just before labour. Most women find it obvious that waters have broken, whilst others are less sure. If you are unsure if your waters have broken, place a maternity pad in your underwear to monitor any fluid leaking and contact Triage for advice.

Note: If your midwife has informed you that you are suitable for Midwifery Led Care (MLC), you should contact the Midwifery Led Unit (Ward 47a) directly on (0161) 701 0018 if your waters break or you think you are in labour after 37 weeks.

- **Severe abdominal pain** (not relieved with Paracetamol).
- **Vaginal Bleeding.** If you notice any vaginal bleeding you should contact Triage immediately for advice. Sometimes, towards the end of pregnancy, you may have a 'show'. A show is when the plug of mucus from your cervix comes away towards the end of pregnancy. It is usually a mucousy, sticky, blood stained vaginal loss. A show is normal, and may occur days or weeks before you go into labour. If you are unsure, please contact Triage.

If you know your blood group is **Rhesus negative**, please inform us when you telephone if you have vaginal bleeding or a bump to your abdomen, as you will require an Anti-D injection.

The following concerns can be seen in your nearest Antenatal Assessment Unit during weekdays and Triage out-of-hours:

- Reduced baby movements.
- Generalised itching (not accompanied by a rash).
- Headaches (not relieved with paracetamol) and/or visual disturbances.

Reduced movements

The importance of monitoring your baby's movements and becoming familiar with your baby's patterns of movements will have been highlighted during your pregnancy.

Do not ignore any reduction in the amount you feel your baby move. It may be an important sign that there is a problem.

You can read more about your baby's movements in pregnancy on our website:

<http://www.cmft.nhs.uk/saint-marys/our-services/maternity-services/your-babys-movements-in-pregnancy>

If you are unsure if your baby is moving around as much as normal, try lying on your left side (this increases the amount of blood and nutrients to your baby), and spending an hour or two monitoring the movements. If you do not feel movements, or you still feel that the movements are reduced, contact one of the following numbers for advice:

Antenatal Assessment Units - Weekdays 8.00 am–4.30 pm

- Saint Mary's Antenatal Assessment Unit – (0161) 276 6404.
- Salford Antenatal Assessment Unit – (0161) 206 5291.

Outside of these hours, contact Triage at Saint Mary's (0161) 276 6567.

Postnatal Issues

After the birth of your baby, your community midwife will visit you in the immediate postnatal period. Out of hours if you experience any excessively heavy bleeding, feverishness/very high temperature, problems related to healing stitches or Caesarean section scars, or other urgent concerns, please contact Triage for advice.

Community Midwives can be contacted for advice on non-urgent postnatal issues on: (0161) 276 6246.

Other sources of help and advice

Obstetric Triage is an emergency service.

Accessing the most appropriate service helps to prevent unnecessary delays for those needing to attend Triage. Please consider using some of the following services if you have a problem that is not related to your pregnancy:

Your GP

Your GP can be accessed for a range of non-urgent services. If you have a non-urgent concern not related to your pregnancy (chest/urine/ear infections, skin complaints etc,) you should see your GP for advice as they are better placed to help with these problems. If you are unable to book an appointment, or need to see a GP out of hours, call your

surgery and follow the advice provided. You may also consider visiting a walk in centre if your GP is closed, or you cannot get an appointment.

You can also obtain treatment for many minor ailments directly from a pharmacist without having to see a doctor. You can read more about this on our website here:

<http://www.cmft.nhs.uk/saint-marys/our-services/maternity-services/advice-and-treatment-for-minor-ailments>

Walk-in Centres

Walk-in centres can be accessed by anyone and have more flexible opening hours. You can visit a walk in centre for any general illness or concern for which you may have visited your GP. You can find your nearest walk in centre at www.nhs.uk. Here are a few walk in centres in the Manchester area:

- Manchester Royal Infirmary (Urgent Primary Care Centre), Oxford Road, Manchester, M13 9WL; Monday to Friday: 8.30 am-10.00 pm; Saturday, Sunday and Bank Holidays: 10.00 am-10.00 pm.
- City Health Centre, 2nd Floor, Boots, 32 Market Street, Manchester, M1 1PL. Open seven days a week: 8.00 am-8.00 pm.
- Hawthorn Medical Centre, Unit K, Fallowfield Retail Park, Birchfields Road, Manchester, M14 6FS. Monday - Friday 8.30 am-10.30 am, 1.00 pm-3.00 pm, 4.30 pm-6.00 pm; Saturday and Sunday 10.00 am-12.00 pm and 2.00 pm-4.00 pm.
- Salford NHS Walk-in Centre, Rear of Pendleton House, Off Broughton Road, Salford, M6 6LS. Monday-Friday, 11.00 am-6.00 pm; Saturday and Sunday 10.00 am-5.00 pm.
- Trafford Walk-in Centre, Trafford General Hospital, Moorside Rd, Urmston, M41 5SL. Seven days a week: 8.00 am-8.00 pm.

Accident and Emergency Department

Your local Accident and Emergency department can still be used if you have an emergency or accident **not** related to your pregnancy (chest pain, difficulty breathing, collapse, etc). Always inform the staff in the department you are pregnant. If your condition may affect your pregnancy, you will be referred to Triage for assessment.

Make sure you have your green hand held pregnancy notes with you at all times.

Visiting Triage

Always try to bring your hand held pregnancy notes to Triage when you attend. This will provide us with important information about your pregnancy so far.

We aim to see you within 15 minutes of arrival. Initially you will be assessed by a midwife in a Triage room. A full set of observations (including blood pressure, pulse and

temperature) will be taken, and you will be asked to provide a urine sample. You can then provide a little more detail about your concern.

Based on the information you provide, the midwife will tell you how quickly you can expect a midwife or doctor to provide further care.

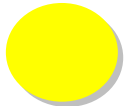
Triaging in this way ensures women are treated in order of clinical need, rather than time of arrival.



Red – Emergency. You will be seen and treated immediately.



Amber (Urgent) – You should be seen within 15 minutes.



Yellow (Moderate) – You should be seen within 45 minutes.



Green (Non Urgent) – You should expect to be seen within 4 hours.

Waiting Times

During busy periods, waiting times may be increased. Some of the reasons for delay may be due to staffing levels, availability of rooms on Triage, or availability of doctors.

It is difficult to predict waiting times, and we understand that waiting can be frustrating.

We appreciate that visiting Triage may be a stressful time for you and your family, and we do our best to keep waiting times to a minimum.

- We recommend you bring a drink and some light refreshments in case of any delays. Staff can advise you of the nearest place to buy food and drinks, and fresh water is available in the waiting area.
- If you experience any changes in your condition whilst awaiting review after being triaged, please inform a member of staff.

Thank you for taking the time to read this leaflet. We hope that the information provided helps to make any visits to Triage as quick and stress-free as possible.