

Saint Mary's Hospital  
Emergency Gynaecology Unit

## Information for Patients

# Out-patient surgical management of miscarriage

(Up to 9 weeks and 6 days of pregnancy)

We understand this can be a difficult time for you and our staff are here to support you throughout this difficult period. If, after reading this leaflet, there is anything you are worried about or unsure of, please ask or let us know.

If you have opted for outpatient surgical management following your miscarriage, this leaflet aims to give you some general information about what this method will involve and what you should expect to happen during your hospital visit for outpatient surgical treatment. It may also help to answer some of the questions you may have. However, it is intended as a guide only and there will be opportunity for you to talk to your nurse and doctor about your care and treatment.

## What is Out-patient surgical management of miscarriage?

Out-patient surgical management involves removing the pregnancy tissue from the uterus (womb) using manual vacuum aspiration (MVA) which is a suction catheter which will be inserted vaginally and into the uterus. This procedure is safe and suitable for the majority of women and it is performed under local anaesthetic in our Emergency Gynaecology Unit. The whole procedure usually last approximately 20 minutes, this includes setting up equipment and undertaking safety checks.

## What are the advantages?

- It is a quick and convenient procedure, typically requiring a 2 hour hospital visit.
- It is associated with less blood loss than other procedures.
- The majority of women find it acceptable and would recommend it to a friend as a treatment for miscarriage.
- It is 95% effective in bringing resolution to your miscarriage

## What are the risks?

The procedure is safe and the risks of complications are low. However, the following are the possible complications which will be discussed with you before the procedure:

- Infection (3 in 100)
- Blood loss requiring transfusion (1-2 /1000)
- Incomplete procedure (5 in 100)
- Injury to cervix or the uterus (1 in 200)
- Scar tissue in the womb
- Need for other surgery

If a complication does occur during the procedure you may need to be admitted to hospital for further tests or surgery.

### What will happen on the day of the procedure?

- When you attend our clinic we will discuss the details of the procedure with you and confirm the consent form is completed.
- We will give you a tablet called Misoprostol to take to help soften and open the neck of your womb. This makes the MVA procedure easier and safer. Sometimes these tablets can cause cramping pain and bleeding and rarely cause a complete miscarriage on their own.
- We will provide a hospital gown for the time of the procedure.
- The procedure will be performed on a bed with stirrups but you will be covered with sheets and ensured that you are comfortable.
- The clinician will perform an internal examination to assess the size and direction of your womb.
- The clinician will then use a speculum (same instrument used in a smear test) to examine the neck of your womb.
- Local anaesthesia will be injected to numb the neck of the womb. This is usually associated with pain but would be short lasting once the local anaesthetic takes effect.
- Surgical instruments and a small tube attached to a syringe are then introduced into the womb to perform the procedure. The sound of suction occurring will be present during the procedure; we encourage people to bring headphones so you can listen to music on your phone as a way of distracting yourself.
- During the procedure 'Gas and Air' will be available if needed.
- After completion of the procedure you will be monitored for at least 30 minutes and will be able to go home if you feel well enough and the bleeding is minimal.
- Women with a rhesus negative blood group will be given an injection of Anti-D after the procedure. A more detailed information leaflet will be provided at this time if you should require Anti-D.

### What preparation will I need?

Prior to the procedure you may eat or drink as normal but we would advise against large meals as some women may feel nauseous during or after the procedure.

We would strongly recommend taking 1g of Paracetamol, 2 hours before the procedure and pain killers will be available when you are with us to minimise your discomfort.

## What can I expect at home after my procedure?

### Vaginal bleeding

You may experience vaginal bleeding, similar to a period, for up to 10 days after surgery. Whilst you are bleeding, to reduce the risk of infection, we advise that you use sanitary towels not tampons, do not undertake water sports and avoid having sex. During this time, you are however advised to shower or bath daily.

### Pain

You can expect to experience abdominal cramps and mild pain following surgery for up to 48 hours after. You may take simple pain relieving drugs such as Paracetamol or Ibuprofen based products, but always read the label/instructions before taking them. A hot water bottle may be helpful to ease any period cramps. It is important to contact the unit, ward or your GP if you have continuous and/or episodes of heavy bleeding, passing clots, have pains or a smelly discharge.

### Rest

Rest as necessary and resume normal activities as you feel able. You may not feel ready to go back to work immediately. You can self-certify for 1 week or we can provide you with a sick note before your discharge or you can see your GP.

### Sex

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 for you and your partner to feel ready – this is completely normal. If you do not want to become pregnant, seek further advice from your doctor or family planning clinic.

### Emotions

It is normal to feel a range of emotions after a miscarriage. You may feel, for example: relieved, sad, numb, confused or angry. It is common to feel 'up and down' for a while. If you feel you need to talk to someone, or, if you have any questions or concerns, please call the unit to speak with one of our specialist nurses. If you would prefer to speak to our counsellor or Early Pregnancy Loss specialist nurse, you can find their contact details below.

### Do I need to inform anyone of my miscarriage?

If you had booked to have your antenatal care at Saint Mary's at Oxford Road Campus or at Wythenshawe Hospital, any antenatal appointments or scans will have been cancelled and staff will have written to your GP, so you do not need to worry about doing this. Unfortunately, we are unable to cancel appointments booked at other hospitals, although we will still inform your GP.

### When can we start trying for another baby?

It is perfectly safe to start trying for another pregnancy once you and your partner feel ready to (providing you feel well and have stopped bleeding). For the purpose of estimating your due date, there may be some advantage in waiting until your next normal period.

Any pre-conception care you had been following should continue such as:

- Taking folic acid
- Reducing your alcohol and caffeine intake
- Stopping smoking
- Eating healthily including lots of fruits and vegetables

## Certificates

As there is no official national recognition at this time of pregnancy's lost less than 24 weeks' gestation, Saint Mary's offers certificates of remembrance. If you would like to know more please ask your nurse.

**If you have any other questions not covered in this leaflet, please do not hesitate to ask your nurse or doctor.**

## Saint Marys Hospital contact numbers

### Emergency Gynaecology Unit (EGU)

(0161) 291 2561 (24 hours)

The EGU is located at Wythenshawe Hospital (enter via entrance 15)

The department operates a telephone triage service, you must call and speak with a specially trained nurse before attending to plan your care

There are no emergency gynae or early pregnancy services at Saint Mary's Hospital, Oxford Road

### Early Pregnancy Loss Specialist Nurse

Maxine: (0161) 276 6571

(Monday – Thursday variable hours – answerphone available)

### Counselling Service (confidential)

(0161) 276 4319

(Monday - Friday 8.30 am – 4.30 pm – answerphone available)

## Useful addresses

The Miscarriage Association Tel: (01924) 200799

[www.miscarriageassociation.org.uk](http://www.miscarriageassociation.org.uk)

[www.earlypregnancy.org.uk](http://www.earlypregnancy.org.uk)

Women's Health Concern Tel: (01628) 478473

[www.womens-health-concern.org.uk](http://www.womens-health-concern.org.uk)

NHS Choices

[www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk)

Saint Mary's Hospital Website

[www.mft.nhs.uk/saint-marys](http://www.mft.nhs.uk/saint-marys)