



PATIENT INFORMATION LEAFLET

GYNAECOLOGY HISTOPATHOLOGY EXAMINATION & RESPECTFUL DISPOSAL OF PREGNANCY REMAINS

This leaflet is for patients who have been seen at St Mary's Hospital: Wythenshawe or Oxford Road Campus. If you have been seen at North Manchester Hospital, please see North Manchester Gynaecology Histopathology Examination and Respectful disposal of pregnancy remains leaflet.

We are very sorry for your pregnancy loss; we appreciate that this must be a difficult time for you and others supporting you.

This leaflet explains the options you have around what happens to your pregnancy remains following a pregnancy loss. We would appreciate if you took some time to read the below information now. This is to avoid further distress or potentially upsetting conversations in the future.

WHAT IS MEANT BY PREGNANCY LOSS

A pregnancy loss may have occurred because of:

- A miscarriage – when a pregnancy ends unexpectedly before 24 weeks.
- An ectopic pregnancy – when a pregnancy develops outside the womb and cannot continue.
- Or it may be that you have had to make the difficult decision to end your pregnancy because of fetal abnormality.

The tissue from a pregnancy loss is often referred to as pregnancy remains. This is usually made up of the placenta, the lining of the womb and blood clots and if developed the embryo or fetus (developing baby).

WHAT IS HISTOPATHOLOGY

Histopathology involves examining the tissue from your pregnancy visually/under a microscope, to confirm pregnancy tissue and to rule out any abnormality which has not been previously identified. Unfortunately, despite histopathology it may still not be possible to establish the cause of your pregnancy loss. Histopathology examination is limited and often it can only confirm pregnancy tissue, or an ectopic pregnancy. However it can rule out or confirm a molar pregnancy, which is a rare complication of pregnancy requiring specialist follow up care and monitoring. Histopathology examination can not identify any genetic

causes for a miscarriage.

PROCEEDING WITH HISTOPATHOLOGY

If you agree to this examination, the histopathologist (a specialist doctor who works in the laboratory) will select small samples of the pregnancy tissue for examination. We need to make you aware that chemical agents may be used during the process of examination to prevent deterioration of tissues.

Sometimes, when pregnancy remains are examined an embryo or fetus is seen, we would like to reassure you this will be left as it has been seen and will not be examined.

The testing process usually takes 4-8 weeks but can take up to 12 weeks in some cases.

Following testing the small samples of tissue examined will be retained by the hospital as part of your medical records.

Once testing is complete, the results are reported and shared with your clinician/gynaecology clinical team. If an abnormality has been found, you will be contacted to inform you of these findings and further follow up will be arranged as appropriate. We aim to inform you of any abnormalities and refer you for specialist follow up within 7 days of receiving the results.

WHAT HAPPENS WITH MY PREGNANCY REMAINS AFTER HISTOPATHOLOGY?

Following testing we need to know how you wish us to proceed with the pregnancy remains (this is the tissue that is not being retained as part of your medical records). This section will discuss the options available. However, if you have any questions, please discuss these with the nurse of doctor involved in your care.

- The hospital can arrange for the respectful disposal of pregnancy remains at Manchester Crematorium, Barlow Moor Road, Chorlton. This process is communal cremation where you have the option to have individual ashes returned or ashes scattered in the crematorium baby garden with ashes from other pregnancy losses. Please discuss with your nurse if you would like further information including the monthly cremation service held at Manchester Crematorium. Hospital arrangements will take place after a 2-week period. If you change your mind on your decision in this time, please contact the ward you were discharged from as soon as you can, alternatively you can email earlypregnancyloss.nurse@mft.nhs.uk
- You may wish to make your own private arrangements for burial or cremation, this would be at your own cost. If you would like to do this, please inform your nurse or doctor. You will then need to email individualcollections@mft.nhs.uk to arrange collection of your pregnancy remains, following testing, in around 4 weeks from your discharge. Alternatively, you may be contacted by the early pregnancy loss team to arrange collection.

If the team are unable to contact you or we have not heard from you after 4 weeks from their first attempt to contact you, in accordance with the Human Tissue Act Code of Practice, arrangements will be made for respectful disposal of your pregnancy tissue by communal

cremation. You will be advised of this by letter and will be given a period of time to make contact and arrange collection if you would not like communal cremation.

DECLINING HISTOPATHOLOGY

You also have the choice to decline histopathology examination. You have the option to have your pregnancy remains included for the next communal hospital cremation. Alternatively, you can decide to take your pregnancy remains to make arrangements for private burial or cremation. Your nurse can discuss these processes with you.

CONSENT

Your nurse or doctor will ask you to sign a consent form detailing how you wish us to proceed with the tissue from your pregnancy loss. We understand that this may be distressing, however your consent needs to be clearly documented to enable us to carry out your wishes and prevent any misunderstanding.

FURTHER SUPPORT

If you have further questions, please speak to your nurse, contact the early pregnancy loss specialist nurse or relevant department using the contact details below.

CONTACT DETAILS



Early Pregnancy Loss Specialist Nurse

Please leave a voicemail message with your name and contact number or you can send us an email. The nurse will aim to return your call or email within 1-3 working days. For any urgent queries please contact the emergency gynaecology unit or the ward you were discharged from.



07814056869



earlypregnancyloss.nurse@mft.nhs.uk



To arrange individual collections, please email: individualcollections@mft.nhs.uk



Emergency Gynaecology Unit

(0161) 291 2561 (24 hours)

Located at Wythenshawe Hospital (enter via entrance 15)



Ward F16

(0161) 291 5060



Ward 62

(0161) 701 3325