

PATIENT INFORMATION

I may have a molar pregnancy – what happens next?

You have been given this information sheet because you have been told that you might have a molar pregnancy (hydatidiform mole). You may never have heard of this condition and may be feeling confused and anxious.

Hydatidiform mole is a medical term referring to the placenta which looks cystic. (mole is a mass of cells; hydatid are containing fluid-filled sacs or cysts). This causes it to overgrow and there may not be a baby formed or growing with this type of pregnancy resulting in miscarriage.

About one in 1200 pregnancies is a molar pregnancy, so it is quite rare. You are likely to have questions about what this means, and what it means for the future. The Miscarriage Association have produced a leaflet which can be found on their website and is very helpful. www.miscarriageassociation.org.uk

Diagnosing a molar pregnancy

Molar pregnancy may be strongly suspected because of its appearance on Ultra Sound Scan or less commonly perhaps from any blood or tissue that you have passed naturally. The hospital gynaecology team will recommend that you have surgical removal of any pregnancy tissue in the uterus to make the diagnosis and reduce complications such as heavy bleeding. This is known as ERPC (evacuation of retained products of conception). The diagnosis will then be confirmed by laboratory examination.

There may be a delay between the ERPC being carried out and your being given the diagnosis. It may a few weeks after your miscarriage when you are contacted by letter or telephone and you may be asked to return to see the doctor before you are told any more.

If you have not heard from the hospital by 4 weeks after your operation, please contact the Early Pregnancy Unit at Torbay on 01803 654607 and leave a message if the answerphone is operating.

One of the Specialist Nurses will investigate the delay in contacting you and will arrange that you are either sent a letter detailing your results if molar pregnancy has been excluded or an appointment with a Doctor at the hospital if further follow-up or investigations are required.

For further assistance or to receive this information in a different format, please contact the department which created this leaflet.

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