

# Medical management (treatment) of miscarriage *(page 1 of 3)*



## Introduction

You will have been given this leaflet to explain medical management of miscarriage in more detail. This advice leaflet goes alongside the 'Management of miscarriage: your options' leaflet.

## What do I need to do before my medical treatment of miscarriage?

This treatment choice can be both a physical experience and a very emotional time. Here are a few suggestions to help with preparation and for making this moment as smooth as possible.

- If you have children at home we suggest you organise family or friends to take care of them for you or with you for as long as you feel is necessary.
- Please make arrangements for someone to accompany you to and from your appointment.
- We suggest that you have someone with you for emotional support during the miscarriage, usually during the first 48 hours after treatment.
- Please make sure you have a good supply of large (or night-time) sanitary towels.
- Make sure that you have a good supply of painkillers. Most women take paracetamol or ibuprofen and, if necessary, these painkillers can be taken together, but please follow the recommended dosage. However, **please do not take ibuprofen 48 hours before your medical management procedure.**

## What happens at my appointment?

- The doctor will explain the procedure again and obtain written consent from you before the procedure begins. This is an ideal time to ask any questions that you may have – it's a good idea to write them down so you don't forget to ask them at your appointment.
- In a private room you will then be asked to remove your trousers/skirt and underwear and get settled onto the examination couch with a sheet covering you.
- The doctor will then perform an internal examination and insert the misoprostol tablets into the vagina around the cervix. A chaperone will be present during this procedure.

If you need your information in another language or medium (audio, large print, etc) please contact Customer Care on 0800 374 208 or send an email to: [customer care@salisbury.nhs.uk](mailto:customer care@salisbury.nhs.uk)

You are entitled to a copy of any letter we write about you. Please ask if you want one when you come to the hospital.

Please complete The Friends & Family Test to tell us about your experience at: [www.salisbury.nhs.uk/FriendsFamily](http://www.salisbury.nhs.uk/FriendsFamily) or download our App from the Apple App store or Google Play Store.

The evidence used in the preparation of this leaflet is available on request. Please email: [patient.information@salisbury.nhs.uk](mailto:patient.information@salisbury.nhs.uk) if you would like a reference list.

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- You will then say on the examination couch so that we can monitor you for 30 minutes and give enough time for the pessaries to dissolve. We suggest that you wear a sanitary towel once the doctor has inserted the pessaries. Once this time has passed and you feel ready, you will be able to get dressed and go home.

### What happens next?

- Bleeding normally starts after a few hours and usually ends within 1-2 days.
- You are likely to experience strong 'period type' cramping pains for the first 1-2 days. We advise you take regular painkillers.
- Bleeding can be heavy and you are likely to pass clots for 4 - 48 hours.
- If there is little or no bleeding in the 48 hours after receiving treatment please call the clinic for advice.
- The bleeding can go on for up to 3 weeks but should get gradually lighter over this time.
- If your bleeding continues for more than 3 weeks call the unit during normal opening hours.
- After 3 weeks, if your bleeding has stopped, take a home urine pregnancy test – this should be negative.
- Someone from the clinic will call you after 3 weeks to ask how you are managing and to get the result of your urine pregnancy test. Please bear in mind that this scheduled phone call will come up as a 'no caller ID' and we can only leave a message if it is clear that it is your telephone number.
- The medical treatment has finished if your pregnancy test is negative and the bleeding has stopped.

### Are there any do's and don'ts?

- You can eat and drink as normal.
- After the treatment we advise using sanitary towels and not tampons until the miscarriage has ended.
- You should take showers (if possible) rather than baths until the miscarriage has ended.

### What are the side effects from the medication?

- A number of women will feel sick and may vomit. This normally settles within 2-6 hours.
- Occasionally women have diarrhoea. This usually improves within a day.
- It is quite common to feel feverish and sometimes have a high temperature for up to a day.
- Some women notice a skin rash. This should disappear within a few days.
- Side effects are fairly common. Most last between 2 and 24 hours. If you feel you need

help or advice with the side effects, please call the unit during office hours.

### When should I call the clinic?

- If you start to feel dizzy, faint, unwell or feel you need urgent assistance – call the Early Pregnancy Unit during opening hours or out of hours call 111/999.
- If you have a temperature and/or feel feverish for more than 24 hours – call the Early Pregnancy Unit during opening hours or out of hours 111, they may recommend you attend A&E.
- If you cannot cope with the pain after taking painkillers – call the Early Pregnancy Unit during opening hours or out of hours 111.
- If you are worried about very heavy bleeding (clots the size of your palm or soaking 2 sanitary pads in an hour) – call the Early Pregnancy Unit during opening hours, or ,out of hours 111. They may recommend that you attend A&E.
- If heavy bleeding goes on for more than 3 days (the bleeding should get lighter with time) – call the Early Pregnancy Unit during opening hours, we may need to admit you for observation/surgical management of the bleeding.
- If light bleeding goes on for more than 3 weeks – call the Early Pregnancy Unit during opening hours.
- If you have smelly vaginal discharge – call the Early Pregnancy Unit during opening hours.
- If you are worried about any aspect of the medical treatment of miscarriage – please call the unit during opening hours.

### Will I see any pregnancy tissue?

Most women will only see blood clots. Some women may see pregnancy tissue, (early placenta) or even the pregnancy sac and embryo, (very early stage of a baby). You will most likely pass these products whilst sitting on the toilet and you may just wish to simply flush the toilet, or you may wish to remove the remains for a closer look – this is natural. You may wish to bring the pregnancy remains to the hospital for sensitive disposal or you may decide to bury the remains at home. Please be aware that the hospital will not be able to carry out any tests on the pregnancy remains.

### What support is available from the clinic during the treatment?

The Early Pregnancy Unit is available for advice and support Monday – Friday 9am to 5pm on:

**01722 336262 ext 2317** and

The Gynaecology outpatient team are available for advice and support Monday – Friday 9am to 5pm on:

**01722 336262 ext 4431**