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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 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 if you would like a reference list.

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Pregnancy of uncertain viability (PUV) (page 1 of 2)

Introduction

This leaflet tells you more about a pregnancy which might not be progressing properly (we call this pregnancy of uncertain viability (PUV)). Please feel free to ask our team any questions you have about the information below.

What is a PUV?

We use the term PUV to describe a pregnancy that is at a stage where we cannot be sure whether it is developing properly or not. While we can see a pregnancy sac in the womb, the sac is either too small to expect to see an embryo, or the embryo can be seen but is too small for us to expect to see a heartbeat yet. This situation is not uncommon and is often because the pregnancy is a little earlier on than expected. It happens in around 1 in 5 women attending early pregnancy units.

What is the likely diagnosis?

It is likely that the pregnancy is perfectly fine and that the scan has been carried out too early for us to see the heartbeat. However, in some cases, it may mean that the pregnancy has failed at an early stage and not developed any further. In other words, this means you have had a miscarriage.

What will happen next?

In order to be able to be sure about what is happening, we need to do another scan later on. We usually wait between 7 and 14 days, depending on what we've seen on the first scan. We know this will be an anxious wait for you, but if we do a scan earlier it may lead to another inconclusive result. This would be unhelpful for you.

If the findings of a PUV are the first sign that the pregnancy is not healthy, it is possible that bleeding and pain will develop and lead to a miscarriage.

What do I do if I have a problem before my next scan?

If you have any of the following symptoms during office hours please contact EPAU on 01722 336262 ext 4431/2317. Outside of office hours please go to your nearest Emergency Department:

- severe lower abdominal pain which is unmanageable and not controlled by painkillers (paracetamol or co-codamol)

- severe vaginal bleeding with large blood clots, (especially if you need to change pads more than once every 30 minutes)

We will give you advice and try to see you on the same day if necessary.

If the bleeding and pain is manageable it may not be necessary for you to come back into hospital sooner than was scheduled, but please feel free to call for advice.

The Early Pregnancy Assessment Unit (EPAU) can be contacted on:

01722 336262 ext 4431/2317 (during office hours)