



## **Expectant Management of a Miscarriage**

Once the Consultant Gynaecologist has confirmed that sadly your pregnancy is no longer on going, they will discuss with you and your partner the options that are available. This will enable you to make an informed choice of how you wish to proceed. We understand this may be a very distressing time for you and we are sorry for your loss.

One of the options is expectant management of your miscarriage.

Expectant management means that we expect your miscarriage to happen to you naturally. This 'wait and see' approach is also known as conservative management and is successful in 65-75% of women and is most successful in early pregnancies which are less than 9 weeks gestation.

It can take time before the bleeding starts and it is normal for the bleeding to continue for up to three weeks. A review appointment will be made for you to attend the hospital to see the Consultant Gynaecologist in approximately 7 days time.

While you are waiting for the miscarriage to happen you will experience heavy bleeding and cramping pain, you should avoid using tampons and we would advise you to use over the counter medication for pain relief. Paracetamol and Ibuprofen can be taken using the manufacturers instructions.

Risk of infection is minimal 1:100 women (1%) will develop an infection. Treatment with antibiotics may be required in some cases and you may be advised to have an operation to remove any retained products of your miscarriage which may be left in the uterus.

Occasionally if the bleeding becomes very heavy and you are in severe pain you will be advised to attend A&E as you may require medical assistance and an operation as described above. Research suggests 2 in 100 women (2%) had bleeding severe enough to require a blood transfusion.

If the bleeding does not start or the miscarriage is not complete you may be offered medical or surgical management and this will be dependant on your clinical condition. If at any point you feel you do not want to wait you can request medical treatment or surgical intervention.

The advantages of expectant management is that you do not have to stay in hospital. It avoids the use of medications or surgery with a general anaesthetic.

It is seen as a more 'natural' process which some women prefer.

The disadvantages are that it can take a few weeks and some women may find it difficult not knowing when or where the miscarriage may start.

Some women might be anxious about coping with the pain and bleeding. They may also be concerned about the possibility of seeing the pregnancy tissue and this is understandable. If you have chosen this method of management you will be able to contact the hospital at any time for advice on the telephone number listed below.

As part of the early pregnancy loss service the GHA has a dedicated book of remembrance for all early pregnancy losses before 20 weeks. You will be able if you wish to acknowledge your loss in this special book of remembrance.

Following your loss the Consultant Gynaecologist will give you a review appointment. At this appointment the Consultant will decide if you require a repeat scan or urine specimen to test for the pregnancy hormone. You will also be able to discuss any issues or concerns about how you feel and your options for the future at this consultation.

This leaflet is to be read in conjunction with the GHA

Gibraltar Health Authority

General Information Leaflet for Women and their Partners

*Management of Early Pregnancy Problems and Miscarriage*

**St Bernard's Early Pregnancy Service Telephone contact details  
20072266 Ext 2124/2125**