

First Trimester Bleeding in Pregnancy



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Vaginal bleeding or spotting in the first trimester occurs in 15-25% of pregnancies. Not all women who have first trimester vaginal bleeding will experience a miscarriage. There are different causes of first trimester bleeding in pregnancy.



What to Expect

As part of your assessment, your doctor has checked for dangerous causes of first trimester bleeding. You may need follow up tests as the cause may not always be clear on the first visit to the emergency department.

Sometimes early in pregnancy, the beta-HCG (pregnancy hormone) level is too low for an ultrasound to be helpful in diagnosing the cause.

This means that you may need follow-up blood tests and/or ultrasound tests to determine that your pregnancy is progressing normally.

Causes of Vaginal Bleeding

Causes of vaginal bleeding in the first trimester can include (but are not limited to):

- Implantation bleeding — a normal process when the fertilized egg implants into the uterus lining.
- Miscarriage — early pregnancy loss, usually because of a non-viable pregnancy.
- Subchorionic hematoma — bleeding under one of the layers of tissue that surrounds the embryo inside the uterus.
- Ectopic pregnancy — a fertilized egg implants into the wrong location (not the uterus), which can cause dangerous levels of bleeding if undiagnosed.
- Infection — infection in the uterus or bladder.

Recommended Follow-Up

- Follow up in ___ days.

Name of Provider

Reason

Date/Time

Location

Contact Info

- _____
- _____

Notes:



When to Get Help

Go to the nearest Emergency Department or Urgent Care if you experience:

- Heavy bleeding – soaking through pad/tampon every hour for more than 2 hours.
- Severe abdominal pain.
- Chest pain.
- Shortness of breath.
- Fainting, lightheadedness, or dizziness.
- Fever.
- Nausea & vomiting beyond your usual pregnancy-related nausea & vomiting.

To Learn More:

- Ask your health-care provider.
- Go to HealthLinkBC - call 8-1-1 (7-1-1 for deaf or hard of hearing) or go online to www.HealthLinkBC.ca

Additional Information

To learn more about vaginal bleeding in pregnancy, this QR code takes you to information from HealthLinkBC, call 8-1-1 (7-1-1 for deaf or hard of hearing)



How to Care for Yourself at Home

There are no specific activities or treatments (such as bed rest) that are proven to prevent or reduce the risk of miscarriage.

My Follow-Up Plan

Appointment: _____

Lab tests: _____

Ultrasound: _____

Other: _____

Find this information sheet on the ECBC website:

https://emergencycarebc.ca/clinical_resource/patient-information-sheet/bleeding-in-early-pregnancy/

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