

## Patient information

# Intrauterine pregnancy of uncertain viability (IPUV)

### Introduction

This leaflet explains what intrauterine pregnancy of uncertain viability (IPUV) is and what to expect at your appointments. If you have any questions about the information below please ask a member of our team.

### What is IPUV?

IPUV is the term we use to describe an early pregnancy. It means that we are able to see a pregnancy sac in the womb but the sac is either too small to expect to see an embryo (the early baby) or the embryo can be seen but is too small for us to expect to see a heartbeat yet. This happens in around 1 in 5 women attending early pregnancy units.

Often the pregnancy is perfectly fine, it is just that the scan has been carried out too early for us to see the heartbeat. This is especially likely if the scan has been done at less than 6 weeks since your last period. However, in some cases, it may mean that the pregnancy has failed at an early stage and not developed any further. In other words, a miscarriage has occurred.

### What will happen next?

In order to be able to confirm what is happening, we need to repeat your scan after 7 to 14 days (depending on what we've seen on the first scan). We know this will be an anxious wait for you but performing a scan earlier may lead to another inconclusive result, which would be unhelpful.

### Your repeat scan appointment in EPAU is:

on: ..... at: .....

If the finding of an IPUV is the first sign that the pregnancy is not healthy, it is possible that bleeding and pain will develop while waiting for the next scan.

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

If you develop cramping, lower abdominal pain or bleeding, it may be a sign that you are miscarrying. Sadly, there is nothing we can do in hospital to stop this from happening and you may be more comfortable staying at home if you feel confident to do so.

However, if at any stage the pain or bleeding is unmanageable in spite of painkillers (paracetamol and codeine are fine to take in pregnancy), you should come in to hospital immediately.

If you soak more than two large sanitary pads per hour for more than two consecutive hours it may be a sign that you are bleeding too heavily and need to be assessed. You would need to come in to the emergency department (ED) in this situation.

### **Who can I contact for more information?**

Early Pregnancy Assessment Unit (Monday to Friday 8.30am – 4.30pm):  
**01284 713143**

Out of hours, please contact Ward F14, the Gynaecology Ward and a member of the nursing team can give you advice: **01284 713235**

Thank you for reading this leaflet, should you wish to provide us with feedback on any part of your experience please email [EPAUserfeedback@wsh.nhs](mailto:EPAUserfeedback@wsh.nhs)

*If you would like any information regarding access to the West Suffolk Hospital and its facilities please visit the website for AccessAble (formerly DisabledGo)*

*<https://www.accessable.co.uk>*



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