Miscarriage

A miscarriage (early pregnancy loss or spontaneous abortion) is a common problem since one out of five pregnancies ends in miscarriage. This usually happens when the pregnancy is not developing normally. It is very unlikely that you or your partner did anything to cause this, although cigarette smoking, sexually transmitted disease, excessive alcohol and drug abuse can increase the risk. Other causes are:

- Abnormalities of the uterus.
- Hormone or medical problems.
- Trauma and genetic (chromosome) problems.

Having a miscarriage does not change your chances of having a normal pregnancy in the future. Your caregiver will advise when to try to get pregnant again.

AFTER A MISCARRIAGE

- A pregnancy cannot be saved if there is continual, heavy vaginal bleeding and cramping, or if you pass any pregnancy tissue. Bleeding and cramping will usually continue until all the tissue has been removed from the womb.
- Often the uterus does not clean itself out completely and a D&C procedure or a medication called misoprostol (Cytotec) is needed to loosen or remove the pregnancy tissue from the uterus. A D&C scrapes or suctions the tissue out.
- **Rh immune globulin (Rho-Gam) is given if your blood is Rh negative and you have not been previously sensitized. You will also be given the Rho-Gam if the father is Rh positive or his blood type is unknown. Rho Gam is given to protect you from Rh problems with your next pregnancy. You may be given an antibiotic if the miscarriage was due to an infection.**

HOME CARE INSTRUCTIONS

- You should rest in bed for the next 2-3 days.
- **Do not** take tub baths or put anything in your vagina, including tampons or douching.
- Avoid exercise and heavy activities until your caregiver gives you permission.
- **Do not** have sex until your doctor or midwife approves.
- Save any thing you pass that looks like tissue for your caregiver to inspect.
- If you and your partner are having problems with guilt or grieving, talk to your caregiver or get counseling to help you understand and cope with your pregnancy loss.
- Allow enough time to grieve before trying to get pregnant again**.**

SEEK IMMEDIATE MEDICAL CARE IF:

- You have persistent heavy bleeding or a bad smelling vaginal discharge.
- You have continued abdominal or pelvic pain.
- Fever develop a fever.
- Severe weakness, fainting or repeated vomiting.
- You develop chills.
- You are experiencing domestic violence.

MAKE SURE YOU:

- Understand these instructions.
- Will watch your condition.
- Will get help right away if you are not doing well or get worse.

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