Threatened Miscarriage

Bleeding during the first 20 weeks of pregnancy is common. This may be called a threatened miscarriage. This is a pregnancy that may end. Often, this bleeding stops with bed rest. This bleeding may decrease or stop with less activity. Your doctor can make suggestions. Often, the pregnancy can continue without any more problems. You may be asked to stop:

- Having sexual intercourse.
- Having orgasms.
- Using tampons.
- Exercising.
- Doing heavy physical activity and work.

CAUSES

Miscarriages happen in 15 to 20% of all pregnancies. They often happen in the first 13 weeks of pregnancy. Things that put you at risk for miscarriage are:

- Hormone problems.
- Infection of the womb (*uterus*).
- Infection of the cervix.
- Ongoing (*chronic*) illness, like diabetes.
- An oddly shaped uterus.
- Fibroids (*fibrous tissue*) in the uterus.
- A cervix that is too weak to hold the baby.
- Smoking.
- Drinking too much alcohol.
- Taking illegal drugs.

TREATMENT

Often, you are told to take bed rest and to stop activities and work. If you have a miscarriage, save all the tissue you pass in a container. Take the container to your doctor. Your doctor will examine this tissue. Treatment may be needed if there is bleeding. Bleeding often keeps going if there is still tissue in the uterus (*incomplete miscarriage*). Tissue left in the uterus can get infected. A doctor will remove the tissue. This may be done in the hospital. Or this may be done in a doctor's office.

HOME CARE

- Write down the number of pads you use each day. Write down how often you change pads. Write down how soaked they are.
- Follow your doctor's advice for follow-up visits and tests.
- If your blood type is Rh-negative and the father's blood is Rh-positive (or is not known), you may get a shot to protect the baby.
- If you and your partner have bad feelings over the lost baby, talk to your caregiver or counselor.
- Do not try to get pregnant until your mind and body are ready. Follow you doctor's advice.

GET HELP RIGHT AWAY IF:

- You have bad cramps or pain in your belly, lower belly, or back.
- You get chills.
- You have a temperature by mouth above 102° F (38.9° C), not controlled by medicine.
- Your bleeding gets worse. Or you pass large clots of blood or tissue. Save this tissue to show your doctor.
- You feel lightheaded, weak, dizzy, or you pass out.
- You have a gush of fluid from your vagina.

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