

Pathological examination and sensitive care of early pregnancy remains

Pathology Department

Information for Patients

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Introduction

This leaflet has been written to help answer the question 'what happens to the remains of my baby or pregnancy remains after miscarriage or abortion of pregnancy?'.

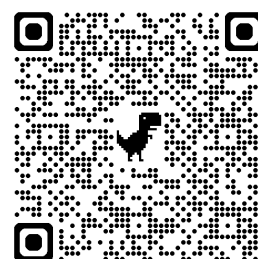
Pathological examination

After a miscarriage, we will usually check the pregnancy remains for certain changes of the placenta. This examination is not usually needed after an abortion.

During the tests on the pregnancy remains, a small part of placenta (afterbirth) is checked under the microscope. First the sample is placed in a wax block, then shavings of the block are placed on a slide to look under the microscope.

The microscopic examination will first check that there is pregnancy remains in the sample (sometimes it is only womb lining or blood clots). Most of the time we do not contact you with the results of these tests unless more treatment is needed.

Secondly, the examination checks for uncommon 'abnormal forms' of placenta (known as [molar pregnancy](#)). If molar pregnancy is found we will contact you and follow-up will be arranged. More information can be found on the NHS website or by scanning this QR code with a smartphone.



Chromosomal testing

If you have had multiple miscarriages and are under the care of the recurrent miscarriage team, we may sometimes offer you further genetic testing of the placenta (afterbirth). We use a test called microarray. We can only use special cells from the placenta to pull out some genetic tissue (DNA) for the microarray test, not blood or membranes etc.

**Health information and support is available at www.nhs.uk
or call 111 for non-emergency medical advice**

Visit www.leicestershospitals.nhs.uk for maps and information about visiting Leicester's Hospitals
To give feedback about this information sheet, contact InformationForPatients@uhl-tr.nhs.uk

We then use this DNA in the microarray test. It can tell us if there were any abnormalities in the chromosomes. Sometimes there are not enough placenta cells in the sample sent to the lab so we are not able to do the test. We only know this when the lab staff are able to look at the placenta under a microscope.

To understand more about [Chromosomes, DNA and Genes](#) click on this link or open this QR code



The results of chromosome tests are rarely helpful in terms of what it means for you and any future pregnancies so this test is not usually done except in special circumstances.

If this investigation is needed the Cytogenetics Department will produce a separate report for your gynaecologist. This usually takes 6 to 8 weeks.

We will usually keep the histology tissue block and slide (including microarray samples if they were done) in pathology archives. They are kept according to national guidance from the Royal College of Pathologists. These are the only remains that are kept back by the lab, if you agree to it. All the rest of the remains will be cared for according to your wishes, after all the tests are complete.

If the amount of remains sent to the laboratory is small, all of it may be needed to prepare the wax block and slide, so there may not be any separate remains left if you wish to make your own arrangements. The bereavement team will let you know if this is the case and you had requested to make your own arrangements.

What happens after all the tests are finished?

You can choose one of the following options for what happens to your pregnancy remains after the examination.

- **Hospital communal cremation** .
- **Make your own arrangements** and organise a private burial or cremation or burial at home of your baby or pregnancy remains in your garden.
- **Hospital incineration**

Whatever you decide to do, we would like to record your written instructions. We will ask you to sign a form telling us what you want us to do.

Hospital communal cremation:

Leicester's Hospitals hold a monthly cremation service at Gilroes Crematorium for pregnancies up to around 16 weeks. It is held by a hospital chaplain. It is not specific to any religion. It is a closed service so you cannot be there for the service, but you can find out the date of the service if you wish. Ashes from the cremation will be scattered within the grounds of Gilroes Cemetery. If you wish at a later date, you can visit the area where the ashes are scattered. Most people (9 out of 10) choose this option

If you prefer to attend a cremation or burial, or want to have any ashes, you need to tell us that you will make your own private arrangements for the cremation or burial.

Making your own arrangements with private burial or cremation:

You can ask a funeral director to organise a service at a cemetery or crematorium of your choice before the remains of your baby are buried or cremated. Family members and friends are able to attend. There may be a small cost for a private burial or cremation.

If you choose to make your own private arrangements, the histology block and slide can be returned to you. Please be aware that this will mean that we will not be able to carry out further tests if new tests become available in the future. Some crematoria do not accept glass slides for cremation so you may need to contact them directly before making your final arrangements.

It is important you tell us if you want to arrange a private burial or cremation as additional forms will need to be completed for the Council Bereavement Office to authorise this.

Making your own arrangements with home burial

A small number of people wish to make their own arrangements, which is allowed if the baby was not born alive and was born before 24 weeks of pregnancy. The most common form of 'home arrangement' is burial in the garden with a floral memorial over the burial site, but other options are available. There is an extra information sheet [Burial outside a cemetery after early pregnancy loss](#) available for women who choose this option (leaflet 489 available from yourhealth.leicestershospitals.nhs.uk/)

Incineration

This is different to a cremation. The remains are sent to a private incinerator to be burnt separately, but in the same way as human remains waste. There will be no ashes.

What if I do not wish to make a choice?

Some people do not wish to make a choice about what happens to the remains of their baby or pregnancy and this is OK. If you do not wish to make a choice, the hospital will arrange for the remains of your baby or pregnancy remains to be communally cremated as part of a monthly cremation service at Gilroes Crematorium.

Changing your mind

If you want to change your mind about your choice, please contact the Leicester Royal Infirmary Bereavement Services for advice as you may need to give written confirmation of the change. They can be contacted on (0116) 258 5194 or (0116) 258 5196 between 10am and 4pm weekdays (excluding public holidays).

If you wish to withdraw consent for any of the examinations, please contact the Gynaecology Assessment Unit as soon as possible. They can be contacted on 0116 258 6259 between 8am and 5pm. Please be aware, if testing has already started, it may not always be possible to reverse the preparation of the samples for the tests.

If you have any questions

We know that this is a lot of information to take in. If you wish to discuss any of this information please speak to the nurse, midwife or doctor looking after you or contact the team at GAU on 0116 258 6259 after you have gone home.

A miscarriage can have a profound emotional impact on you and also on your partner, friends and family.

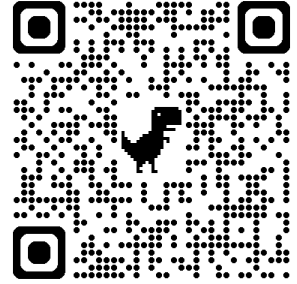
Advice and support are available during this difficult time.

You can contact our counselor at anytime to request an appointment by calling 07534168299

Remembrance

If your pregnancy ends before 24 weeks, you do not need to formally register a miscarriage. But you will be able to get a certificate in memory of your baby, if you would like one.

<https://www.gov.uk/request-baby-loss-certificate>



اگر آپ کو یہ معلومات کسی اور زبان میں درکار ہیں، تو براہ کرم مندرجہ ذیل نمبر پر ٹیلی فون کریں۔
على هذه المعلومات بلغة أخرى، الرجاء الاتصال على رقم الهاتف الذي يظهر في الأسفل

જો તમને અન્ય ભાષામાં આ માહિતી જોઈતી હોય, તો નીચે આપેલ નંબર પર કૃપા કરી ટેલિફોન કરો

ਜੇ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਇਹ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਕਿਸੇ ਹੋਰ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਵਿਚ ਚਾਹੁੰਦੇ ਹੋ, ਤਾਂ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਹੇਠਾਂ ਦਿੱਤੇ ਗਏ ਨੰਬਰ 'ਤੇ ਟੈਲੀਫੋਨ ਕਰੋ।

Aby uzyskać informacje w innym języku, proszę zadzwonić pod podany niżej numer telefonu

If you would like this information in another language or format such as EasyRead or Braille, please telephone 0116 250 2959 or email equality@uhl-tr.nhs.uk