

Ectopic Pregnancy

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An ectopic pregnancy is a complication of pregnancy in which the embryo (fertilised egg) attaches outside the uterus. (See page 15)

Symptoms

- Abdominal pain (severe)
- Vaginal bleeding (not menstrual bleeding)
- Pelvic pain
- Tender cervix

It is extremely important to see a doctor if you have a combination of the symptoms mentioned above. Untreated ectopic pregnancies can result in abdominal distension, tenderness, shock and even death.

It is furthermore essential to see a doctor if you have a combination of these symptoms, because they can also be due to other conditions, such as a miscarriage, ovarian torsion, kidney stones, pelvic inflammatory disease and acute appendicitis.

Diagnosis

An ectopic pregnancy can be diagnosed with a blood pregnancy test and an ultrasound.

Risk factors

There are various factors that can increase your risk of having an ectopic pregnancy:

- Pelvic inflammatory disease
- Smoking
- History of infertility
- Previous ectopic pregnancy
- Endometriosis

Treatment

Ectopic pregnancies can be treated medically or surgically. Your doctor will decide on the best treatment based on your diagnosis.

