

Incomplete Miscarriage



Today's exams show that you have had a miscarriage. This is the unplanned end of a pregnancy before 20 weeks. When a miscarriage happens, you're likely to have a wide range of feelings.

Completed miscarriage means that the embryo or fetus, placenta, and other tissues are passed out of the uterus with bleeding. Incomplete miscarriage means only some of the fetal tissues pass out of the uterus. Some tissue stays in the uterus. You may have heavy vaginal bleeding.

It's important to know that you did not cause this to happen. Miscarriage is very common. About 1 or 2 out of every 10 pregnancies end this way. Miscarriage usually takes place in the first 10 weeks after conception. It may happen before you know you are pregnant. It may happen for many reasons. Often the cause is not known.

Miscarriage is not your fault. It didn't happen because you did something wrong. Sex or exercise does not cause a miscarriage. These activities are safe unless your healthcare provider tells you to stop. Even a minor fall won't cause a miscarriage.

It appears that your miscarriage is not yet complete. This means that some tissue from the pregnancy is still in your uterus. You will have more cramping and bleeding for the next few days as the tissue leaves your uterus. In most cases, all of the tissue will pass out by itself. In some cases, tissue remains. If so, it must be removed. This is done to stop bleeding and prevent infection.

Home care

After you go home:

- You may not feel well for a few days. Your body is going through changes. You will have mood swings.
- You may have some cramping and bleeding, but it shouldn't be severe.
- You may pass fetal tissue. It may appear as a 1-inch or larger piece of gray or pink tissue.
- When you are ready, you can start to go back to your normal routine.

Until the bleeding stops fully, to prevent infection:

- Don't have sex until your healthcare provider says it's OK.
- Don't use tampons. Use pads instead.
- Don't use douche.

Having a miscarriage is stressful and upsetting. It's natural to feel sadness or grief. Partners grieve, too. It may help to talk about your feelings with family, friends, a counselor, or spiritual advisor.

Follow-up care

Follow up with your healthcare provider as advised. If you had an ultrasound, a radiologist will look at it. You will be told of any results that may affect your care.

If fetal tissue has not passed from your vagina in the next 5 days, call your healthcare provider. You will need another exam. Your provider might need to take out the tissue with surgery. This is to prevent infection in your uterus. Or you may be given medicine to take at home. This will help the rest of the tissue come out of your body.

Call 911

Call 911 if you have any of these:

- Severe pain and very heavy bleeding
- Severe lightheadedness, passing out, or fainting
- Fast heart rate
- Trouble breathing
- Confusion
- Trouble waking up

When to get medical care

Call your healthcare provider right away if you have any of these:

- Heavy bleeding that soaks 1 pad an hour over 3 hours
- Fluid from your vagina that smells bad
- Fever of 100.4°F (38°C) or higher
- Pain in your lower belly (abdomen) that gets worse
- Weakness or dizziness

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