

Missed 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.

Missed miscarriage means the embryo or fetus dies, but does not pass out of the uterus. Sometimes dark brown spotting occurs. There is no fetal heartbeat or growth of the fetus.

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.

You still have some tissue from the pregnancy in your uterus. Because of this, you may have some bleeding. It might be light spotting. Or it may be as heavy as a period. You may have some cramping. In most cases, all of the tissue will pass out by itself. Then nothing else needs to be done. In some cases, tissue stays in the uterus. It must be removed. This is done to stop bleeding and prevent infection.

After you have recovered, you should be able to get pregnant again. Before trying, talk with your healthcare provider.

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
- Passing anything that looks like body tissue from your vagina. Save it in a clean container. Bring it to your provider.

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