



EARLY PREGNANCY LOSS

Miscarriage or early pregnancy loss is having a spontaneous loss of pregnancy prior to reaching 20 weeks. However, most miscarriages happen much earlier than this (usually before 12 weeks). This heartbreaking event typically occurs when the fetus develops abnormally and can even happen before a woman knows she's pregnant.

Types of Miscarriages



Threatened

- Vaginal bleeding
- Closed cervical os
- Fetal cardiac activity



Inevitable

- Vaginal bleeding
- Dilated cervical os
- Products of conception may be seen or felt at or above cervical os



Incomplete

- Vaginal bleeding
- Dilated cervical os
- Some products of conception expelled & some remain



Complete

- Vaginal bleeding
- Closed cervical os
- Products of conception completely expelled

SYMPTOMS

The most common signs and symptoms of a miscarriage include:

- **Vaginal spotting or bleeding**
- **Pain or cramping in your abdomen**
- **Lower back pain**
- **Passing fluid or tissue from your vagina**

*Although vaginal bleeding can be a symptom of miscarriage, it is also common during the first trimester in pregnancies without any complications.

CAUSES / RISK FACTORS

Most miscarriages are due to genetic abnormalities in the fetus, caused by chromosomal mishaps as the embryo develops. There are risk factors that remain unknown for having a miscarriage, but some include:

- **Age (40% chance of miscarriage at 40 years or more)**
- **History of miscarriages**
- **Chronic conditions (uncontrolled diabetes)**
- **Problems with the uterine cavity**
- **Smoking, alcohol and drugs**
- **Weight (overweight or underweight)**

DIAGNOSIS

Miscarriages can be detected by performing a variety of the following tests:

- **Blood tests:** the pregnancy hormone, human chorionic gonadotropin (hCG), can be re-tested to compare it with prior readings to determine if it has increased appropriately or not. Evidence of a decreasing hCG level can indicate the event of a miscarriage.
- **Ultrasound:** using a transvaginal probe to capture images, miscarriage can be detected by the absence of fetal heart tones and/or presence of any abnormalities within the gestational and yolk sac.
- **Tissue tests:** lab testing can be performed on passed tissue to determine the event of a miscarriage.
- **Chromosomal tests:** blood samples from you and your partner can be sent to the lab for testing to determine if chromosomal factors contributed to the event of a miscarriage.

TREATMENT

There are various treatment options for miscarriage, depending on the type of miscarriage that is diagnosed. Some women prefer to let the miscarriage resolve on its own and rest to allow the bleeding and pain to stop. Other options include using medication to help quicken the process of expelling the tissue, or having a procedure known as Dilation and Curettage (D&C) to remove the tissue from the uterus.