



Patient & Family Guide
2019

Possible Ectopic (Tubal) Pregnancy

Nova Scotia Women's
Choice Clinic (NSWCC)



www.nshealth.ca

Possible Ectopic (Tubal) Pregnancy

What is an ectopic pregnancy?

An ectopic pregnancy is when a fertilized egg implants outside of the uterus, most often in the fallopian tube. As the fertilized egg grows, it stretches the fallopian tube until it could eventually rupture (break open).

Are ectopic pregnancies common?

About 1-2% of all pregnancies are ectopic. It is important that an ectopic pregnancy is found early to protect the woman's health. An ectopic pregnancy is serious and can be life-threatening if not treated.

Why test for an ectopic pregnancy?

An ectopic pregnancy may be suspected if the location of the pregnancy can't be found. This may happen when:

1. A woman has a positive pregnancy test, but an ultrasound does not show pregnancy in the uterus.
2. A woman has had an early abortion (under 12 weeks) and the doctor could not find evidence of the pregnancy in the removed tissue.

In both situations, the chances of an ectopic pregnancy are rare. It is more likely that the pregnancy is just very early and hard to find. However, it is important to make sure that the pregnancy is not ectopic.

Two blood tests are needed to measure your pregnancy hormone level: the first test on the day of your ultrasound and/or abortion, and the second test in two days to make sure the level of pregnancy hormone has gone down. It is also possible that another ultrasound will be needed.

What symptoms should I watch for while waiting for my test results?

- Sudden, severe (very bad), sharp lower abdomen (stomach area) pain, usually on one side more than the other.
- Pain that goes up to your shoulder or under your rib cage, especially when lying down.
- Bleeding from your vagina, like when you have your period.

If you have any of the symptoms listed above while waiting for your test results, **call 911 immediately or go to the nearest Emergency Department.** Explain your symptoms and that you are being tested for an ectopic pregnancy. Do not call the Nova Scotia Women's Choice Clinic (NSWCC), because you need to get help right away.

Remember, the symptoms listed on the previous page need emergency medical care right away.

How will I get my test results?

A doctor or nurse from the NSWCC will call you when your test results are available. They will talk with you about the results, positive or negative, and any followup you will need.

**Please call 902-473-7072 with any questions.
We are here to help you.**

Looking for more health information?

Find this pamphlet and all our patient resources here: <http://library.nshealth.ca/PatientGuides>

Contact your local public library for books, videos, magazines, and other resources.

For more information, go to <http://library.novascotia.ca>

Connect with a registered nurse in Nova Scotia any time: call 811 or visit <https://811.novascotia.ca>

Learn about other programs and services in your community: call 211 or visit <http://ns.211.ca>

Nova Scotia Health Authority promotes a smoke-free, vape-free, and scent-free environment.

Please do not use perfumed products. Thank you!

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The information in this pamphlet is to be updated every 3 years or as needed.