



Patient & Family Guide

2024

# Possible Ectopic (Tubal) Pregnancy

Aussi disponible en français : FF85-1964



[www.nshealth.ca](http://www.nshealth.ca)

# Possible Ectopic (Tubal) Pregnancy

## What is an ectopic (tubal) pregnancy?

- An ectopic pregnancy is when a fertilized egg attaches outside of the uterus. This is also called a tubal pregnancy because the egg often implants in 1 of the fallopian tubes. As the fertilized egg grows, it stretches the fallopian tube. This can cause the fallopian tube to rupture (break).
- **It is important that an ectopic pregnancy is found early.** It can be life-threatening if it is not treated.
- About 1 to 2% of all pregnancies are ectopic.

## Why do I need to be tested for an ectopic pregnancy?

- Your health care provider may test you for an ectopic pregnancy if they cannot find the embryo or fetus. This may happen when you have a positive pregnancy test, but the embryo or fetus does not show in your uterus on an ultrasound.
- **Ectopic pregnancies are rare.** It is more likely that your pregnancy is just very early and hard to find.

## How is the test done?

- You will need 2 blood tests to check your pregnancy hormone level:
  - › The first test will be on the day of your ultrasound and/or abortion.
  - › The second test will be done 2 days later. This is to make sure your pregnancy hormone level has gone down.
- You may also need a second ultrasound.

### **While you are waiting for your test results:**

#### **Call 911 or go to the nearest Emergency Department right away if you have:**

- › Very bad, sharp lower abdominal (stomach) pain. This sudden pain is usually on 1 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
- Tell staff that you are being tested for an ectopic pregnancy.
- **Do not call the ROSE clinic. You need to get help right away.**

## How will I get my test results?

A doctor or a nurse from the ROSE Clinic will call you with your test results. They will talk with you about any follow-up you may need.

### **If you have questions or concerns:**

#### **ROSE Clinic**

- › Phone: 902-473-7072
- › Hours: 8 a.m. to 3 p.m.,  
Monday to Friday
- › If there is no answer, leave a message and staff will return your call (during office hours).
- › **If it is an emergency, call 911.**

This pamphlet is for educational purposes only. It is not intended to replace the advice or professional judgment of a health care provider. The information may not apply to all situations. If you have any questions, please ask your health care provider.

Find this pamphlet and all our patient resources here:  
<https://library.nshealth.ca/Patients-Guides>

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

*Prepared by:* Reproductive Options and Services (ROSE) Clinic  
*Designed by:* Nova Scotia Health Library Services

WP85-1600 © August 2024 Nova Scotia Health Authority  
To be reviewed August 2027 or sooner, if needed.