



# Early Pregnancy Assessment Units (EPAUs)

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## Information for women, birthing people, and their families

We are sorry that you are having concerns in the early stages of your pregnancy.

Our Early Pregnancy Assessment Units (EPAUs) see women and birthing people who are between 6 to 16 weeks pregnant:

- with pregnancy concerns; or
- who have had early pregnancy problems before.

### How am I referred to the EPAU?

There are a number of ways you can be referred to the EPAU.

- If are seen in the Emergency Department with any concerns about your pregnancy, you should be referred to EPAU for a follow-up blood test and / or scan. If you have been referred to EPAU for a routine scan, your details will be passed to EPAU by the Emergency Department. EPAU will contact you the next working day.
- You can be referred from your GP surgery.
- If you have any urgent concerns, you can contact your closest EPAU for advice and to make your own appointment.

**If you have any urgent concerns, please go to your nearest Emergency Department immediately. If you have one, please do not wait for your appointment at the EPAU. Urgent concerns include becoming unwell with heavy vaginal bleeding and / or uncontrolled pain.**

### Why has this appointment been recommended?

You have been referred to the EPAU as you meet the following criteria.

- You are having pain and / or vaginal bleeding with a positive pregnancy test.

- You have had:
  - two or more consecutive (back to back) miscarriages
  - a previous ectopic pregnancy; or
  - a previous molar pregnancy.

### What will happen when I arrive at the EPAU?

- You will be greeted at the EPAU reception, and asked to wait until a nurse is free to see you.
- A specialist nurse will take a history of your pregnancy and any previous pregnancies.
- You may have a blood test taken, to measure the pregnancy hormone level in your blood. If needed, this can be used at future appointments, to monitor the progress of your pregnancy.
- You may have an ultrasound scan. The best images are available in early pregnancy from an internal (vaginal) scan.

### Who will perform the ultrasound scan?

The ultrasound scans are usually performed by a qualified scanner called a sonographer. This may be a male member of staff. If you want, you can have somebody with you for support. Following this scan you will return to the clinic to see the nurse.

### When and how will I receive my results?

The clinics are run by nurses. After your scan, you will return to the clinic and the nurse will discuss your scan and blood results with you. If necessary, they may ask a doctor to examine you.

### Will I need a follow-up appointment?

After the nurse has explained your results to you, they will arrange with you a plan for your future care. The plan will include any follow-up appointments.

### What should I do if I feel unwell at home?

If you have any urgent concerns about your pregnancy, please call your closest EPAU. Our EPAU clinics can be found at:

- Birchington Ward, **Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother (QEQM) Hospital**, Margate  
Telephone: 01843 234469
- Women's Health Suite, **William Harvey Hospital**, Ashford  
Telephone: 01233 651987

**If you have any urgent concerns, please go to your nearest Emergency Department immediately. If you have one, please do not wait for your appointment at the EPAU. Urgent concerns include**

**becoming unwell with heavy vaginal bleeding and / or uncontrolled pain.**

### Further information

Useful information can be found on the following web sites.

- Miscarriage Association (<https://www.miscarriageassociation.org.uk/>)
- The Ectopic Pregnancy Trust (<https://ectopic.org.uk/>)
- NHS: miscarriage (<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/miscarriage/>)

### What do you think of this leaflet?

We welcome feedback, whether positive or negative, as it helps us to improve our care and services.

If you would like to give us feedback about this leaflet, please fill in our short online survey. Either scan the QR code below, or use the web link. We do not record your personal information, unless you provide contact details and would like to talk to us some more.

**Giving feedback about this leaflet**



<https://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/MDOBU4/>

If you would rather talk to someone instead of filling in a survey, please call the Patient Voice Team.

- **Patient Voice Team**  
Telephone: 01227 868605  
Email ([ekhuft.patientvoice@nhs.net](mailto:ekhuft.patientvoice@nhs.net))

**This leaflet has been produced with and for patients.**

**Please let us know:**

- If you have any accessibility needs; this includes needing a hearing loop or wanting someone to come with you to your appointment.
- If you need an interpreter.
- If you need this information in another format (such as Braille, audio, large print or Easy Read).

**You can let us know this by:**

- Visiting the Trust web site (<https://www.ekhuft.nhs.uk/ais>).
- Calling the number at the top of your appointment letter.
- Adding this information to the Patient Portal (<https://pp.ekhuft.nhs.uk/login>).
- Telling a member of staff at your next appointment.

**Any complaints, comments, concerns or compliments**, please speak to a member of your healthcare team. Or contact the Patient Advice and Liaison Service on 01227 783145 or email ([ekh-tr.pals@nhs.net](mailto:ekh-tr.pals@nhs.net)).

**Patients should not bring large sums of money or valuables into hospital.** Please note that East Kent Hospitals accepts no responsibility for the loss or damage to personal property, unless the property has been handed into Trust staff for safe-keeping.

**Further patient information leaflets** are available via the East Kent Hospitals' web site (<https://www.ekhuft.nhs.uk/patient-information>).

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