

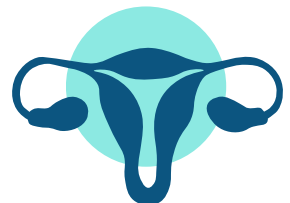
Understanding Early Pregnancy Loss



Early pregnancy loss, often referred to as miscarriage, is a surprisingly common experience, affecting 10-20% of known pregnancies [Mayo Clinic]. It's the spontaneous ending of a pregnancy before 20 weeks. While emotionally difficult, it's important to understand the different types of miscarriage and the options available for managing this loss.

Types of Early Pregnancy Loss:

- **Ectopic Pregnancy:** These are pregnancies that are implanted outside of the uterus. These can be life threatening. If you have severe or persistent abdominal or pelvic pain you need to be evaluated immediately.
- **Threatened miscarriage:** Vaginal bleeding occurs, but the cervix remains closed, and the pregnancy may continue.
- **Inevitable miscarriage:** Bleeding and cramping indicate the pregnancy is ending.
- **Incomplete miscarriage:** Some pregnancy tissue remains in the uterus after bleeding and cramping.
- **Complete miscarriage:** All pregnancy tissue has passed from the body naturally.
- **Chemical pregnancy:** A very early loss, often mistaken for a heavy period, where implantation occurs but the embryo doesn't develop.
- **Missed miscarriage:** The fetus has died, but the body hasn't expelled the tissue.



What to Do if You Think You Are Experiencing a Miscarriage:

If you experience any signs of early pregnancy loss, such as vaginal bleeding or cramping, contact your doctor immediately. They may do a physical examination, bloodwork, or an ultrasound to diagnose the type of miscarriage and recommend the best course of action.

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Pregnancy Loss Management Options:

- **Expectant management:** For certain types of miscarriage, your doctor may recommend waiting for the body to naturally expel the remaining tissue.
- **Dilation and Curettage (D&C):** This is a minimally invasive surgical procedure to remove any remaining tissue from the uterus.
- **Medications:** In some cases, medication may be used to help expel tissue.

Pregnancy Loss Support Resources:

Early pregnancy loss can be emotionally and physically draining. Here are some resources for support:

- **Your doctor:** They can provide medical advice and emotional support.
- **Therapist:** Talking to a therapist can help you process your emotions.



- **Support groups:** Connecting with others who have experienced similar losses can be very helpful.
- **Online resources:** Several websites and online communities offer support and information about miscarriage.

Remember, miscarriage is not your fault. It's important to allow yourself time to grieve and seek support from loved ones or healthcare professionals.