

# Understanding Ectopic Pregnancy: Symptoms, Risks, and Treatment Options



## Highlights

An ectopic pregnancy occurs when a fertilized egg grows outside the uterus, usually in one of the fallopian tubes.

It is a type of early pregnancy loss and can be life-threatening if left untreated due to the risk of heavy bleeding.

Certain factors can increase the likelihood of having an ectopic pregnancy.

Treatment can involve medication or surgery, depending on the severity.

## In This Article

Understanding Ectopic Pregnancy

Symptoms to Watch For

Risk Factors for Ectopic Pregnancy

Diagnosing Ectopic Pregnancy

Treatment Options for Ectopic Pregnancy Impact on Future Pregnancies

When Can You Resume Sexual Activity?

Trying for Another Baby After an Ectopic Pregnancy

Tools and Assistance

## Understanding Ectopic Pregnancy

## **Symptoms to Watch For**

Vaginal bleeding or spotting  
Abdominal pain, especially on one side  
Back pain  
Shoulder tip pain  
Nausea and vomiting  
Fast heart rate  
Dizziness or fainting

## **Risk Factors for Ectopic Pregnancy**

Fertility treatments such as in vitro fertilization (IVF)  
A history of sexually transmitted infections (STIs)  
Previous abdominal or pelvic surgeries  
Smoking  
Being 35 years old or older

## **Diagnosing Ectopic Pregnancy**

Blood tests to measure pregnancy hormone levels (hCG)  
Ultrasound, including vaginal ultrasound, to determine the location of the pregnancy

## **Treatment Options for Ectopic Pregnancy**

Laparoscopy (keyhole surgery) to remove the ectopic pregnancy  
Open surgery in more severe cases or when complications arise

## **Impact on Future Pregnancies**

## **When Can You Resume Sexual Activity?**

## **Trying for Another Baby After an Ectopic Pregnancy**

After surgery: usually at least 2 months  
After methotrexate: typically 3 to 4 months, as the medication can affect

future pregnancies

## **Tools and Assistance**

**Pregnancy Test Kits:** Useful for confirming pregnancy, though medical confirmation is required to determine the location.

**Blood Test Monitoring:** Regular hCG testing helps track pregnancy progression and detect complications.

**Counseling Services:** Many clinics and healthcare providers offer emotional support and counseling for individuals and families.

**Support Groups:** Local or online support groups can provide emotional connection and shared experiences.

**Health Tracking Apps:** Fertility and health apps can help monitor cycles and symptoms for discussions with your healthcare provider.