

About Ectopic Pregnancy (Tubal Pregnancy)

What is an ectopic pregnancy?

Ectopic pregnancy is a pregnancy outside of the uterus. It occurs when a fertilized egg attaches itself outside of the uterus (womb), usually in the fallopian tubes.

An ectopic pregnancy is dangerous because it can cause the fallopian tube to rupture or burst. This can lead to extreme pain and life-threatening internal bleeding.

What are the usual symptoms of an ectopic pregnancy?

An ectopic pregnancy may bring about one or more of the following:

- Positive pregnancy test
- Vaginal spotting or bleeding
- Lower abdominal pain or cramping, often on one side
- Shoulder pain
- Dizziness or feeling faint

What causes ectopic pregnancy?

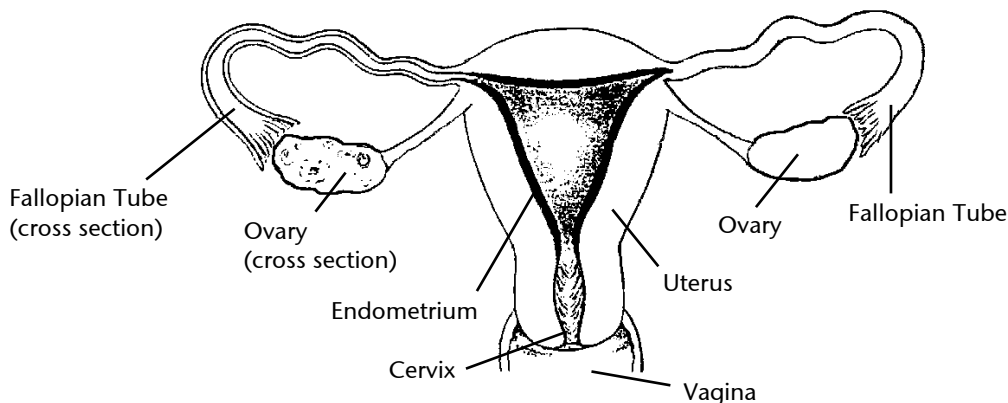
The exact cause may not be known, but factors that may contribute to an ectopic pregnancy are:

- Previous infection in the fallopian tubes
- Scar tissue from previous surgeries
- Previous ectopic pregnancy
- History of sexually transmitted disease(s)

How is ectopic pregnancy diagnosed?

It is difficult to diagnose an ectopic pregnancy until it causes symptoms. At that time, a woman will need to see her doctor right away. To diagnose an ectopic pregnancy, the **doctor may suggest:**

- A pelvic exam
- A series of blood tests
- A pelvic ultrasound



Ectopic pregnancy is a serious and possibly life-threatening condition. If you are seeing your doctor or nurse because of a possible ectopic pregnancy, **it's very important that you follow all suggestions.**

Be sure to call your doctor or nurse if you have:

- Fainting, dizziness or weakness
- Sudden change or increase in abdominal pain
- Change or increase in vaginal bleeding
- Shoulder pain
- Fever greater than 100.6 degrees