



Te Whatu Ora
Health New Zealand

Surgical management of a miscarriage

What to expect from surgical management of a miscarriage

An evacuation of the uterus, also known as a D&C, is a surgical procedure to remove the pregnancy tissue from the uterus. The procedure is done using a suction device placed through the vagina and cervix into your uterus. The procedure can be done under either general anesthesia or sedation and will require a visit of approximately 3 – 5 hours.

An Evacuation of the Uterus for miscarriage treatment:

- Is a choice for all women.
- may be necessary if there is unusually heavy vaginal bleeding.
- can be recommended by the medical team based on individual circumstances.

Preparing for the procedure

- Your appointment will be arranged by the Early Pregnancy Assessment Unit.
- You must not eat for 6 hours prior to the procedure. You may drink sips of water up to 2 hours before your arrival time.
- It is advisable to have a shower on the morning of the procedure.
- Please do not wear makeup, nail polish or jewelry.
- As you cannot drive for 24 hours after having an anaesthetic, you must arrange to get to the hospital, and for a responsible adult to drive you home afterwards.

On arrival at the Greenlane Surgical Unit/Auckland City Hospital

When you arrive, you will check in at a reception, either Reception K for procedures at Greenlane Surgical unit, or ORDA for procedures at Auckland City Hospital. A nurse will then check you in, and ensure you are ready for the procedure. The nurse will ask you what you would like done with your pregnancy tissue (see below). You will usually be given some pain relief, and a medication called Misoprostol while you wait. The surgeon and the anaesthetist will see you to explain the procedure, and to get your consent. This is a good chance to ask any questions you have. Once the team is ready, you will be taken through to theatre, go to sleep, and tissue will be removed via a suction device. You will not feel anything while you are asleep.

Care of your pregnancy tissue.

After your procedure your pregnancy tissue – *Ira tangata*, will be sent for testing. Please let the staff know if you do not want the testing to proceed and if you wish to have your pregnancy tissue – *Ira tangata*, returned to you immediately after your procedure.

Alternatively, you can collect your pregnancy tissue after testing from Labplus. They will call you when testing is complete. Testing at the laboratory will confirm the tissue is the pregnancy tissue, which can help confirm the miscarriage is complete. They also check for features of a Molar pregnancy.

You may wish to bury it. If you do not have access to private land, some *whanau* select a special pot plant to use.

We cremate all tissue left at the hospital and the ashes are placed at the Mangere Gardens Cemetery.

After the procedure

Once the procedure is complete, you will be moved into the recovery room where you will be monitored as you wake up from the anaesthetic. A nurse will be with you the whole time. They will ensure you are comfortable and can give you pain relief and anti-nausea if needed. When you are awake and feeling well, the nurse will get you out of bed and dressed, and you will move into a lounge area to have some light refreshments and ensure you are feeling well when you are up and about. You should not drive for 24 hours after the anaesthetic. Please arrange to be driven home and for an adult to be with you for the 24 hours after the procedure.

Before you leave you will be given a clinical summary letter about your procedure and a copy will be sent to your GP. We recommend you have the following day off work and see your GP for a checkup in 2 weeks.

Discharge advice about pain

Resume your usual activities as soon as you feel able. You may get some lower abdominal discomfort, like period pain, for the next few days which should be relieved by regular pain relief medication. If this is not controlling your pain, please contact your GP.

Discharge advice to prevent an infection

For at least 2 weeks, or until the bleeding stops, we recommend that you put nothing in your vagina. This means:

- No sexual intercourse
- Use sanitary pads, not tampons
- No swimming or spa pools
- Shower instead of bathing

Please finish any antibiotics you may have been given, even if you are feeling well and healthy again. Please seek medical advice if you:

See your GP if you develop flu-like symptoms or experience vaginal discharge that becomes smelly.

Go to your closest Emergency department if you get a temperature over 38° and/or have heavy bleeding or large clots.

Pregnancy Loss Service National Women's Health Social Work & Counselling Service

We are aware that this could be a difficult time for you.

You may wish to talk with one of us about some of the emotions you are experiencing, such as; anger, pain, despair, numbness, sadness or a sense of unreality. These can be common feelings at this time.

If we are unable to see you while you are in hospital, please do not hesitate to ask a staff member to contact one of us on your behalf. Alternatively, you can phone one of us yourself when you get home. We look forward to talking with you.

Contact

09 307 4949 ext. 25967

021 893 912

Resources

Sands New Zealand

www.sands.org.nz

Miscarriage Support NZ

www.miscarriagesupport.org.nz



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Health New Zealand
Te Toka Tumai Auckland

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