



Belfast Health and
Social Care Trust

caring supporting improving together

Your choices for treatment of miscarriage



You have three options for dealing with your miscarriage – you may choose a surgical operation, you may decide to let nature take its course or you may choose tablets to speed up the natural process.

Expectant management (letting nature take its course)

This works for about 50% of women. It can take time before the bleeding starts and it may continue, although not heavily, for up to three weeks. The bleeding is heavier than a period and you may also have abdominal cramps. Rarely, you would need to be admitted to hospital as an emergency if the bleeding was very heavy or the pain was very severe. If after a few weeks, the bleeding hadn't started or the miscarriage wasn't complete, you would be offered one of the other two options.

Medical management (taking tablets)

Some women are not happy to wait for nature to take its course and choose medical management. This involves attending the Early Pregnancy clinic on 2 occasions, and taking 2 different medications, one to prime the womb and one to cause contractions to help the womb to empty itself and you would miscarry at home. It is a safe, effective treatment but does involve heavy

vaginal bleeding and abdominal pain, as in a spontaneous miscarriage and is a more protracted process than surgical management.

Surgical management

This involves a plastic tube being passed into your womb and having the pregnancy tissue gently removed by suction. It can be done under general anaesthetic when the woman is asleep or just as effectively under local anaesthetic when the woman is awake. This is a safe and effective procedure but carries the very small risk of damaging the womb or the cervix. There are also very small risks of having a general anaesthetic.

Your midwife will help guide you to make the choice of management that is right for you.

Contact numbers

Early Pregnancy Clinic, D ward
028 9615 1198 (office hours, Mon – Fri)

Admissions Department 028 9615 0596 or
028 9615 1080 (out of office hours)