

Health Center
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Pregnancy of Unknown Location Patient Take-Home Sheet

What is a Pregnancy of Unknown Location?

A “pregnancy of unknown location” (sometimes called PUL) is when you have a positive pregnancy test, but a pregnancy is not seen on an ultrasound.

This can happen in three situations:

1. The pregnancy is early and too small to be seen on ultrasound; this is normal and the most common cause.
2. The pregnancy is an early pregnancy loss (miscarriage), the next most common cause.
3. The pregnancy develops outside of the uterus (ectopic pregnancy). This is rare.

Why is this monitored closely?

This is closely monitored due to the risks of ectopic pregnancy. Although a rare diagnosis, the risks of ectopic pregnancy include bleeding, rupture (breaking open), damage to reproductive organs, and the need for emergency surgery. If an ectopic pregnancy is not caught early, it can cause death.

A pregnancy of unknown location is followed closely to help tell the difference between the three possible cases.

What follow-up do I need?

Your care may include follow-up blood tests to monitor your pregnancy hormone level and/or ultrasounds more than once. If you choose not to continue the pregnancy or the pregnancy is an ectopic pregnancy or early pregnancy loss, your care may also include medications or a procedure.

Next Test/Ultrasound Appointment: _____

When should I call my doctor?

If you have vaginal bleeding, sharp pelvic or back pain, lightheadedness, dizziness, or shoulder pain. If you faint or experience sudden symptoms, you should seek emergent medical attention.

Phone Number: _____

Other RHAP resources:

- [Ectopic Pregnancy Fact Sheet](https://www.reproductiveaccess.org/resource/ectopic-pregnancy/) (https://www.reproductiveaccess.org/resource/ectopic-pregnancy/)