



Early Pregnancy Assessment Unit

The Early Pregnancy Assessment Unit (EPAU) is a specialist area in the Mater Mothers' Hospital that deals specifically with problems in early pregnancy. The most common problems are vaginal bleeding or pain. You may be reading this leaflet because you have been referred to this service. If so this leaflet may help you understand what may be happening at this time. You may however be reading this just in case you were to have a problem in the early stages of your pregnancy. This leaflet will then help you understand more about this service.

What happens if I need to attend EPAU?

The staff in EPAU will be able to make a further, fuller assessment of the problems you are having, including a review of your symptoms, and a physical examination. During your 30 minute appointment, you will be seen by the EPAU team of a nurse, doctor and a sonographer, if a scan is required. In some cases the visit may also involve taking some blood tests or an ultrasound scan. Often this scan is performed from the vagina as well as through the abdomen. Blood tests may take some hours to come back therefore it is not always possible to give a diagnosis at this time. We will ring you later with results and sometimes further appointments will need to be arranged.

Do I need a referral?

No. A referral from your GP is not essential. You are very welcome to ring EPAU yourself on

07 3163 5132. Someone will be available 24 hours a day to answer your questions. We will advise you when to come to the hospital.

If I am bleeding then what might be wrong?

Small amounts of bleeding in early pregnancy are not uncommon, especially if they do not last for very long. However, it may be the first signs of a problem, such as a miscarriage, and it is important that we follow up on such symptoms. Should the bleeding be heavier or last longer, particularly if it is associated with period like cramping pains, then a possible miscarriage is more likely.

When will I be seen?

Whilst every effort is made to arrange appointments on the day of referral, this cannot always be achieved and we will offer the earliest available appointment. Usually this appointment is within a day or so. Your appointment may be arranged by your GP, the emergency department or by our Co-ordinator (especially if presenting after-hours or on weekends) who will phone you with your appointment.

How do I get there?

EPAU is located on level 7 of the new Mater Mothers' Hospital. From the front entrance of the hospital, please go to level 7 via the lifts. Just outside the lifts is the MFM reception desk. Please present here 10 minutes prior to your appointment. You will then be directed to EPAU. (Please refer to the map for further details). We are open on weekdays from 9 am to 12 noon. Unfortunately visits are by appointment only.