

## Women and Children's Care Group Patient Information

### Pregnancy related sickness (Hyperemesis)



If you are experiencing severe sickness in your pregnancy, this leaflet will give you information on what to do and what to expect if you have to come to hospital for treatment. If you have any other questions or concerns, your midwife or doctor will be happy to discuss them with you.

**Gynaecology Ward**

01952 565914

**GATU (Gynaecology Assessment and Treatment Unit)**

01952 565955

**Antenatal Ward (Maternity)**

01952 565922

## **Introduction**

Many women have episodes of nausea and vomiting in their pregnancy. It more commonly occurs during the first 12 weeks in pregnancy, and often in the morning (hence 'Morning sickness').

It can, however, occur at any time during the pregnancy and at any time during the day, and if severe you may become dehydrated and feel very poorly.

If your midwife or GP refers you into hospital before 16 weeks of pregnancy, you will usually go to the Gynaecology Assessment and Treatment Unit (GATU). After 16 weeks, or if GATU is full, you will go to the Antenatal Ward in the Maternity Unit.

This leaflet describes your care if you have been referred to hospital because of severe sickness in your pregnancy. It also suggests things you can do to help once you go home after treatment.

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## **What care will you have?**

When you have been admitted to GATU or the ward, you will be seen by a doctor as soon as possible. Please be patient if the doctors are busy. If the doctor assesses that you need treatment, the following care may be given:

- A small tube will be inserted into a vein your arm to give you fluids, to rehydrate you (intravenous drip).
- Blood samples will be taken to check how your body is coping with the sickness, and to see if there are any signs of infection.
- You will be given anti-sickness medication, usually via the intravenous drip initially.
- When you need to pass urine, you will be asked to use a bedpan so that we can measure your fluid output.
- You will be able to eat and drink if you are able to tolerate this. We will monitor the fluids you take in.
- On your first admission, an ultrasound scan, if you have not already had your dating scan.

If you respond well to treatment, you will be able to go home after about 4 – 6 hours, usually with anti-sickness medication.

A letter will be sent to your GP to inform him/her about your treatment.

If you don't respond well to treatment you may have to be admitted to a ward, either in Gynaecology or Maternity, depending on your number of weeks pregnant and on the bed status on the wards.

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## **What happens next?**

If the anti-sickness medication controls your symptoms at home, you will continue with your normal maternity care.

If you still feel very unwell the next day, you can phone the Gynaecology Ward: 01952 565914, or the Antenatal Maternity Ward on 01952 565922.

You can then come in again the next day for your treatment to be repeated.

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## **What else can you do to help yourself at home?**

- If you are sick first thing in the morning, take time getting up. Try some dry toast or a plain biscuit and water before getting up.
- Get plenty of rest and sleep. Feeling tired makes the sickness feel worse.
- If necessary, let people know you are pregnant so that they can support you.
- Eat little and often, rather than big meals.
- Drink plenty of fluids, especially water and squash.
- Distract yourself as much as possible.
- Avoid food and smells that make you feel sick. If possible ask someone else to make meals, and stick to plain, non greasy food.
- Wear comfortable, loose-fitting clothes.

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Please contact your midwife or GP again if you continue to be very unwell.

## Other sources of information

### NHS Choices

The UK's biggest health website, certified as a reliable source of health information: [www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk)

### Patient UK

Evidence based information on a wide range of medical and health topics: [www.patient.co.uk](http://www.patient.co.uk)

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### Patient Advise and Liaison Service (PALS)

PALS will act on your behalf when handling patient and family concerns, they can also help you get support from other local or national agencies. PALS, is a confidential service.

**Princess Royal Hospital**, Tel: 01952 282888

**Royal Shrewsbury Hospital**, Tel: 0800 783 0057 or 01743 261691

**Website:** [www.sath.nhs.uk](http://www.sath.nhs.uk)

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### Disclaimer

This leaflet is provided for your information only. It must not be used as a substitute for professional medical care by a qualified doctor or other health care professional. Always check with your doctor if you have any concerns about your condition or treatment. This leaflet aims to direct you to quality websites: these are correct and active at the time of production. The Shrewsbury and Telford Hospital NHS Trust is not responsible or liable, directly or indirectly, for ANY form of damages whatsoever resulting from the use (or misuse) of information contained in this leaflet or found on web pages linked to by this leaflet.

### Your information

Information about you and your healthcare is held by the NHS. You can find out more about how we hold your information and how it is used on our website at [http://www.sath.nhs.uk/patients-and-visitors/Data\\_Protection/Data\\_Protection.aspx](http://www.sath.nhs.uk/patients-and-visitors/Data_Protection/Data_Protection.aspx)

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