



The Royal College of Emergency Medicine

Safety Flash

February 2021

Think Ectopic



- **ECTOPIC PREGNANCY - 12,000 cases** a year in the UK
- Vaginal bleeding, shoulder tip pain, lateralising pain, syncope are **RED FLAGS** for imminent or actual rupture
- Do a pregnancy test in all women of reproductive age with suspected symptoms attributable to an ectopic – some women are **unaware** they are pregnant
- Women with suspected ectopic require **urgent** Gynaecology assessment
- In women with pain/bleeding in early pregnancy where the risk of an ectopic is considered low, offer an early EPAU appointment & **written safety netting advice**.

HSIB investigation found communication and advice provided about Early Pregnancy Clinics could be improved. Link to the report:

(<https://www.hsib.org.uk/documents/219/hsib-report-diagnosis-ectopic-pregnancy.pdf>)

The RCEM has a publicly available discharge advice leaflet template, with thanks to Dr Hannah Bell, via this link: (<https://www.rcem.ac.uk/docs/Safety%20Resources%20+%20Guidance/Patient%20leaflet%20template%20-%20Local.pdf>)

For Safety Alerts and RCEM issued Safety Flashes see:

www.rcem.ac.uk/SafetyAlerts