

Bleeding – 1st, 2nd, & 3rd Trimesters

Perspectives and When to Call



Bleeding from the vagina can be scary in at any point in your pregnancy, and we encourage you to contact us at any time with any amount of bleeding. Things to report:

1. When bleeding began and what you were doing at the time.
2. Is the bleeding rapid or gradual?
3. Describe associated pain – where it hurts, sharp or dull, and how frequent
4. What other symptoms you are experiencing
5. Describe what makes the symptoms better or worse
6. What you have done to treat your symptoms

Possible Recommendations:

- Call your midwife if:
 - Vaginal bleeding
 - Abdominal cramps
 - Back pain
 - Pelvic pain
 - Gush of fluid from vagina
 - Fever of > 100.4°F
- Rest – if bleeding and pain begin or come back
- Refrain from activities or touching that causes orgasm
- Pelvic rest – nothing inside the vagina (no intercourse, douching, vaginal treatments, etc.)
- Office or home visit with your midwife
- Diagnostic testing
- Treatment with herbs and supplements

It is important to know that some bleeding can be normal or benign, yet all bleeding should be reported.

Resources:

American Pregnancy:

<http://americanpregnancy.org/pregnancy-complications/bleeding-during-pregnancy/>

Mayo Clinic:

<http://www.mayoclinic.org/symptoms/bleeding-during-pregnancy/basics/definition/sym-20050636>

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Possible reasons for bleeding

First Trimester:

1. Delayed menstruation
2. Breakthrough menstrual bleeding
3. False pregnancy
4. Implantation bleeding
5. Spotting after sex*
6. Ectopic pregnancy
7. Possible miscarriage
8. Loss of twin/multiple
9. Infection (ie: UTI)*
10. Cervical injury
11. Polyp rupture*
12. Molar pregnancy



Second or Third Trimester:

13. Hemorrhoids
14. Placenta/vasa previa
15. Placenta abruption
16. Uterine rupture
17. Preterm labor
18. Trauma

*May occur in any trimester



Facts and Statistics:

- Bleeding may be fresh (bright red), or old (dark brown), light, occur once, persist for several days, or be sudden and heavy.
- Bleeding before 20 weeks occurs in 20-30%; many have uncomplicated pregnancies
- Bleeding is most common complication for the 1st trimester

If cramping with no bleeding, try:

- Hydrate with water
- Glass of wine
- Eat a meal or snack
- Rest/relaxation
- Natural calm
- Epsom salt bath

Reference:

- Davis, E. (2012). *Heart and hands: A midwife's guide to pregnancy and birth*. Berkeley: Ten Speed Press.
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- King, T., Brucker, M., Kriebs, J., Fahey, J., Geger, C., Varney, H. (2015). *Varney's midwifery*. Burlington, MA: Jones & Bartlett Learning.
- LaBleu, J. (2016). Participation lecture – bleeding in pregnancy MCU. 2016.
- Tharpe, N., Farley, C., & Jordan, R. (2013). *Clinical practice guidelines for midwifery & women's health (Fourth ed.)*. Burlington, MA: Jones and Bartlett.