

Anembryonic Pregnancy or Blighted Ovum

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Overview

A blighted ovum (also known as “anembryonic pregnancy”) happens when a fertilised egg attaches itself to the uterine wall, but the embryo does not develop. Cells develop to form the pregnancy sac, but not the embryo itself. A blighted ovum usually occurs within the first trimester before a woman knows she is pregnant. A high level of chromosome abnormalities usually causes a woman’s body to naturally miscarry.

How do I know if I have a blighted ovum?

A blighted ovum occurs very early in pregnancy, before most women even know that they are pregnant. You may experience a missed or late menstrual period, minor abdominal cramps, minor vaginal spotting or bleeding, and a possible positive pregnancy test. As with a normal period, your body will flush the uterine lining, but your period may be a little heavier than usual. Many women assume their pregnancies are on track because their hCG levels are increasing. The placenta can continue to grow and support itself without a baby for a short time and pregnancy hormones can continue to rise which would lead a woman to believe she is still pregnant. A diagnosis is usually not made until an ultrasound tests shows either an empty gestation sac.

Causes

A blighted ovum is the cause of about 50% of first trimester miscarriages and is usually the result of chromosomal problems. A woman’s body recognises abnormal chromosomes in a fetus and naturally does not try to continue the pregnancy because the fetus will not develop into a normal, healthy baby. This can be caused by abnormal cell division, or a genetically abnormal egg or genetically abnormal sperm.

Surgical or Conservative Treatment options

This is a decision only you can make for yourself. Nowadays, most doctors do not recommend a surgical evacuation for an early pregnancy loss. It is believed that a woman’s body can pass tissue on its own and there’s no need for an invasive surgical procedure with a risk of complications. An evacuation does, however, have the beneficial of providing fetal tissue for a pathologist to examine to determine a reason for the miscarriage.



Can a Blighted Ovum be Prevented

Unfortunately, in most cases, a blighted ovum cannot be prevented. Some couples will seek out genetic testing if multiple early pregnancy loss occurs. A blighted ovum is usually a onetime occurrence and rarely will a women experience more than one. We recommend couples wait at least 2 regular menstrual cycles before trying to conceive again after any type of miscarriage.

Our Female Healthcare Philosophy

At the Women's Natural Health Clinic, we specialise in providing comprehensive natural reproductive, gynaecological, obstetric and general healthcare for females from adolescence to post-menopause. Our approach is to integrate techniques in both oriental and western medical diagnosis to formulate a naturally oriented treatment plan combining acupuncture, herbal medicine, nutritional therapy, exercise and lifestyle. Each treatment plan is tailored specifically to each individual woman maximizing results.

Please email us at enquiries@naturalgynae.com with questions, we are more than happy to provide any information via email that will assist you in deciding which treatment approach would be best for you

For more information, contact details and appointments click here www.naturalgynae.com