

Recurrent Miscarriage

It is a surprise for many women to discover how common miscarriage actually is. More than one in five pregnancies ends in a miscarriage. When you conceive and a baby is created, it takes half its genes from the sperm and half from the egg that ovulated that month. At the exact time of conception, the cross-over of these genes takes place. But for many different reasons this complex process sometimes goes wrong and sadly the pregnancy miscarries.

We know that half of these miscarriages can be explained by either chromosomal or genetic abnormalities which occur naturally as part of the random nature of the eggs and sperm joining, and it is a matter of chance that some of these pregnancies do not survive. Even with a mother in perfect health, these pregnancies were just 'not meant to be'. As distressing as these miscarriages are, fortunately for many women, the genetic jigsaw fits together better next time and the following pregnancy is perfectly fine.

Sometimes there are other causes that usually only begin to become apparent when the mother has a further miscarriage. 'Recurrent miscarriage' is diagnosed when a woman miscarries consecutively 2 times, before 20 weeks gestation. Some of these will also be due to bad luck, although the probability of there being some other explanation increases the more miscarriages she has. 1 in 100 women miscarry 3 or more times consecutively, and when this happens, it is quite likely that there is something very wrong.

A proportion of these women can be diagnosed with a variety of conditions, and the outcome for them after treatment is very good. For other women however there is no apparent cause of their recurrent miscarriage

Possible Causes of Miscarriage

The following is a list of some of the possible causes of your miscarriage and their occurrence in the population.

Cause	Percentage
Immune mechanisms	50%
Hormonal	20%
Blood disorders	10-13%
Anatomy	5-10%
Chromosome abnormality	
Primary miscarrier (no live births)	7%
Secondary miscarrier (one or more live births)	50%
Infection	1%
Unknown	15%