FACT SHEET ABOUT ECTOPIC PREGNANCY

An ectopic pregnancy is a pregnancy in which the fertilized egg implants outside of the uterus. Most ectopic pregnancies implant in the fallopian tube, but they may also be located in the ovary, cervix, or abdomen.

Some conditions that increase a woman’s chances of having an ectopic pregnancy are:
- previous infection of the uterus or fallopian tubes
- previous abdominal surgery
- previous surgery of the fallopian tubes, including tubal ligation
- use of an IUD
- previous ectopic pregnancy

Early signs and symptoms of ectopic pregnancy can be quite vague. Only a small number of women have these early signs, which are:
- menstrual periods stop and pregnancy symptoms start
- slight, on-and-off bleeding or spotting from the vagina
- sudden abdominal pain

If the pregnancy in the fallopian tube continues to grow, it can break through the wall of the tube and cause serious bleeding in the abdominal cavity. This requires immediate treatment that may include abdominal surgery, which must be done by a specialist.

Please call the clinic if you have:
- a dull, persistent pain in the lower abdomen;
- vomiting;
- fainting;
- urinary or rectal pressure or tenderness;
- pain with sexual intercourse.

Please call the clinic IMMEDIATELY if you:
- have severe abdominal pain or cramping on one or both sides
- shoulder pain
- also feel faint and weak

THIS CAN BE LIFE THREATENING. If you cannot reach anyone within a few minutes, GO TO THE NEAREST EMERGENCY ROOM IMMEDIATELY. Tell them you may have an ectopic pregnancy.