

Living with Gestational Trophoblastic Tumours - A Quick Guide



Contents

This is a brief summary of the information on 'Living with Gestational Trophoblastic Tumours' from CancerHelp UK. You will find more detailed information on the website.

In this information there are sections on

- Coping with molar pregnancy, persistent trophoblastic disease or choriocarcinoma
- Fertility after molar pregnancy, persistent disease or choriocarcinoma
- Questions for your doctor
- Gestational Trophoblastic Tumour organisations

Coping with molar pregnancy, persistent trophoblastic disease or choriocarcinoma

These conditions belong to a group of tumours known as gestational trophoblastic tumours (GTTs).

Because these tumours are rare, you may not have heard of them before. And other people probably haven't heard of them either. There is a lot to take in and learn. It can be hard to understand that you might need chemotherapy even if your tumour is not thought of as a cancer.

The specialist treatment centres have experienced staff who will explain things to you and answer your questions. They have booklets that you and your family can read. If you are having treatment there you will meet other women in the same situation.

Coping with loss

If you thought you were pregnant, you will be trying to accept the loss of your pregnancy, as well as trying to understand your diagnosis. If you have been pregnant your hormones may also be changing, and this often leads to changes in mood. It can take time to adjust to what has happened. Try and talk to those close to you about how you are feeling.

Practical problems

As well as coping with your emotions, you have to work out how to manage practically. There may be money matters to sort out. Who do you tell about your diagnosis? And how do you find the words? There may be children to consider.

The 'coping with cancer' section of CancerHelp UK contains lots of information you may find helpful.



Fertility after molar pregnancy, persistent disease or choriocarcinoma

Your periods

Due to the high hCG levels, your periods stop. Once the hCG levels go back to normal, your periods start again. If you have chemotherapy your periods will probably stop temporarily. And you might go through the menopause sooner than you would if you didn't have treatment.

Fertility

You can still have children after most treatments for GTT. But it is important not to get pregnant straight away after a GTT. If you only needed a D and C you can usually try to get pregnant as soon as your hCG levels have been normal for 6 months. If you've had chemotherapy, you will need to wait a year after finishing your chemotherapy before you try and get pregnant again. Having a GTT does not increase your risk of having a baby with abnormalities. And the risk of another molar pregnancy is low.

Contraception

Doctors recommend that you don't use the combined oral contraceptive pill until your hCG levels return to normal. Taking it when your levels are still up may make it more likely that you'll need chemotherapy treatment. You should also avoid using any type of coil (IUD, intrauterine device) until your hCG levels get back to normal.

What to ask your doctor about living with gestational trophoblastic disease

- Will I be able to have more children?
- When can I try for a baby?
- Can I take the contraceptive pill again?
- What contraception can I use?
- What will happen to my periods?
- Can I take HRT when I go through the menopause?
- I feel very tearful, why?
- What help and support is there?
- Can anyone help with claiming benefits?
- Can I get help with travel costs?
- Can my family get help with travel costs?
- Is there any help with childcare while I am having treatment?

Gestational trophoblastic tumours organisations

Cancer Research UK
Main website: www.cancerresearchuk.org
Patient Information website:
<http://cancerhelp.cancerresearchuk.org>
Cancer Information Nurses phone: 0808 800 40 40

The Hydatidiform mole and Choriocarcinoma UK information and support service
Website: <http://www.hmole-chorio.org.uk>

Weston Park Trophoblastic Disease Centre - Sheffield
Website: <http://www.shef.ac.uk/chorio>

Molar pregnancy support website
Website: <http://www.molarpregnancy.co.uk>

Notes



More information

For more information about gestational trophoblastic tumours, visit our website <http://cancerhelp.cancerresearchuk.org>

You will find a wide range of detailed, up to date information for people affected by cancer, including a clinical trials database that you can search for cancer trials in the UK. You can view or print the information in a larger size if you need to.

For answers to your questions about cancer call our Cancer Information Nurses on **0808 800 4040** 9am till 5pm Monday to Friday

Adapted from Cancer Research UK's Patient Information Website CancerHelp UK in February 2011. CancerHelp UK is not designed to provide medical advice or professional services and is intended to be for educational use only. The information provided through CancerHelp UK and our nurse team is not a substitute for professional care and should not be used for diagnosing or treating a health problem or disease. If you have, or suspect you may have, a health problem you should consult your doctor. © Cancer Research UK 2011. Cancer Research UK is a registered charity in England and Wales (1089464) and in Scotland (SC041666).