

Pregnancy testing before your operation

Information for patients

You have been given this leaflet because you are considered to be of childbearing age.

If there is *any* possibility of you being pregnant, please share this with the nurse on the day of your surgery and you will be offered a pregnancy test.

Please be aware that pregnancy tests can be negative in the first 3 weeks after conception and we would kindly ask you to avoid sexual intercourse or use an effective method of contraception in the three weeks before surgery.

General information

Surgery and anaesthesia during pregnancy

- For the **mother** is safe, provided the pregnancy is known and documented so that appropriate precautions can be taken.
- For the **baby** is generally safe. There is no strong evidence of an increased risk of miscarriage or major birth defects. There is some evidence of slightly higher rates of low birth weight, premature birth and infant death for babies of women undergoing non-obstetric surgery during pregnancy, however, it is unclear whether this is due to the surgery or the underlying condition necessitating it.

X-ray imaging during pregnancy

- X-rays are necessary during some operations. The potential risks of x-rays and the risks of avoiding x-rays need to be carefully balanced and will be discussed with you by your surgeon.
- X-ray related risks to the **mother** are generally similar to those of non-pregnant women.
- X-rays given to the mother exposes the **baby** to small doses of radiation. There is no evidence of increased birth defects, intellectual disability, growth restriction or pregnancy loss from radiation at this dose.

It's OK to Ask

When you understand what's going on with your health, you can make better decisions around your care and treatment.

www.nhsinform.scot/campaigns/its-ok-to-ask/



SCAN ME