

Women's Cancer Information Project

Coordinated by the European Institute of Women's Health

Gestational Trophoblastic Tumour

This type of cancer can occur in women during childbearing years. It is a *rare* type of cancer in which the cancer cells grow in the tissues that are formed following conception (the joining together of sperm and egg). It starts inside the [womb](#). There are two types of tumours:-

1. Hydatiform mole/molar pregnancy.
 - In this tumour the sperm and egg cells have joined but there is no baby developing in the uterus.
 - Instead the tissue formed resembles grape like cysts.
 - This type can spread from the uterus to other parts of the body.
2. Choriocarcinoma.
 - This type may start from a hydatiform mole or from tissue that remains following an abortion, delivery of a baby, or miscarriage.
 - This type can spread from the uterus to other parts of the body.

SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS

Signs and symptoms are not easy to detect; in it's early stages it may look like a normal pregnancy.

You should see your doctor immediately if:

- If you have bleeding from your [vagina](#).
- If your uterus gets bigger after you have given birth, had an abortion, or a miscarriage.
- If you are pregnant and you have not felt the baby move at the expected times.
- Excessive vomiting.

TESTS

If suspected your doctor may use several tests to examine for the presence of this cancer. These include an internal [pelvic](#) exam and an [ultrasound](#). A blood test may also be carried out to test for high levels of a certain hormone which is present during pregnancy. If however you are not pregnant and the hormone is still found in your blood, it can be a sign of a gestational trophoblastic tumour.

TREATMENT

Two kinds of treatment are used to treat this kind of cancer. These are: [Surgery](#) and [Chemotherapy](#). [Radiotherapy](#) may also be used in certain cases. – The type of treatment chosen depends on the stage of the cancer, your age and your overall health.
