- perform a pregnancy test (a negative urine test essentially excludes ectopic pregnancy - it has a negative predictive value of 99%)
perform blood tests for:

- exclusion of other causes of abdominal pain
- rhesus status

perform MSU

- most important test is a transvaginal pelvic USS
- if bHCG is <1200 an IUP is seen on only 20% of scans
- if bHCG is >1200 and there is no IUP seen this is very good evidence of an ectopic pregnancy
- serial bHCG is useful in patients with non-diagnostic scans
- normal increase in bHCG in the 1st trimester is 1.66Xs every two days. 20% of normal pregnancies do not show this rise & 20% of ectopics show this rise
 - treat patilents with haemorrhagic shock or peritonitis with fluid resuscitation & transfer to theatre

treatment options are:

- 1. surgery. Used for:
- unstable patients
- large ectopics
- patients with peritonitis
- 2. methotrexate. Used for:
- no peritonitis
- ectopic <3.5cm
- no free fluid on USS
- ability to closely monitor as an outpatient

investigation

treatment

ectopic pregnancy [created by Paul Young

02/10/071

definition

aetiology

 an ectopic pregnancy is a fertilised ovum which implants outside the lining of the uterus

risk factors for ectopic pregnancy include:

- history of tubal ligation
- history of ectopic pregnancy
- prior tubal infection
- fallopian and endometrial anomalies
- fertility drugs
- endometriosis
- IUCDs

NB: 50% of patients with proven ectopic pregnancy have no risk factors

rate of coexistent intrauterine & ectopic pregnancy is about 1/5000 in patients not on fertility treatment

- important things from the history are:
- 1. presence & amount of PV bleeding (occurs in 80%)
- 2. location of pain
- 3. risk factors for ectopic pregnancy
- 4. LMP

symptoms

signs

- 5. shoulder pain (suggests large amount of peritoneal blood)
- 6. faintness
- most people with ectopic (97%) present with abdominal or pelvic pain
- most important part of the examination is the pelvic. Look for:
- 1. adnexal tenderness & masses
- 2. state of cervix & material passing through it (large amount of blood is inconsistent with ectopic pregnancy)
- listen for fetal heart tones (they are almost never heard in ectopic)