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Matric number: 17/MHS02/096

Department: Nursing science 200 level

COURSE: PHS 212

What is implantation?After the sperm and the egg join (conception), the combined cells start multiplying pretty quickly and moving through one of your fallopian tubes to your uterus. This cluster of rapidly growing cells is called a blastocyst.Implantation takes place anywhere between 6 and 12 days after you ovulate. It most commonly occurs 8 to 9 days after conception. So the exact date of implantation can depend on when you ovulated, and whether conception occurred early or late in the ovulation window.

Symptoms of Implantation

\*Bleeding

It’s actually a little unclear how common implantation bleeding is. Some sources claim that one-third of all women who become pregnant experience implantation bleeding

\*Cramps

It’s no secret that early pregnancy causes a rapid shift of hormones

\*Bloating

Rising progesterone slows your digestive system down. This can make you feel bloated. But as so many of us know, this feeling can be a really common symptom of your period

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What Are the Signs That Implantation Has Occurred?

Medically reviewed by Valinda Riggins Nwadike, MD, MPH on July 17, 2019 — Written by Megan Dix, RN, BSN

Symptoms

Takeaway

What is implantation?

We don’t know if we should blame Hollywood or the false reality of social media, but the phrase “getting pregnant” gets tossed around as if it’s a simple one-step process. But there are actually a ton of tiny, amazing things that need to happen in your body to result in pregnancy.

After the sperm and the egg join (conception), the combined cells start multiplying pretty quickly and moving through one of your fallopian tubes to your uterus. This cluster of rapidly growing cells is called a blastocyst.

Once in your uterus, this little bundle of cells has to attach, or implant, into your uterine wall. This step — known as implantation — triggers rising levels of all those fun pregnancy hormones (estrogen, progesterone, and hCG, or human chorionic gonadotropin).

If implantation doesn’t happen, your uterine lining is shed in your normal monthly period — a serious disappointment if you’re trying to get pregnant, but a reminder that your body is likely prepping for you to try again.

But if implantation does occur, your hormones — sometimes a nuisance, but doing their job — cause the placenta and the embryo (your future baby) to develop and your uterine lining to stay in place and support your pregnancy.

Implantation takes place anywhere between 6 and 12 days after you ovulate. It most commonly occurs 8 to 9 days after conception. So the exact date of implantation can depend on when you ovulated, and whether conception occurred early or late in the ovulation window.

When you’re hoping to get pregnant, it’s natural to be very aware of your body and notice every change, no matter how small.

Assuming a lack of symptoms means you’re not pregnant? Not so fast. Keep in mind that most women experience no signs at all of conception or implantation — and are still pregnant! — though some women do experience signs of implantation.

Let’s explore some symptoms you might notice if implantation has occurred, but keep our little disclaimer in mind:

Having the symptoms listed below doesn’t necessarily mean you’re pregnant — and having no symptoms doesn’t necessarily mean you’re not.

Possible signs of implantation

Bleeding

It’s actually a little unclear how common implantation bleeding is. Some sources claim that one-third of all women who become pregnant experience implantation bleeding, but this actually isn’t backed by peer-reviewed research. (Something on the internet that may not be true? Say it ain’t so!)

Here’s what we can tell you. Up to 25 percent of women experience bleeding or spotting in the first trimester — and implantation is one cause of first trimester bleeding.

This bleeding can be confusing, because it may happen around the time that your regular period would start. Most commonly though, it will occur a few days to a week before you expect your menstrual period.

There are other differences that can help you determine whether you are experiencing implantation bleeding or your period:

implantation bleeding is most likely to be light pink or brown (as opposed to the bright or dark red of your period)

implantation bleeding is more like spotting than an actual flow of blood

This spotting may occur once, or last for a few hours, or even up to three days. You may notice some pink or brown discharge when you wipe or on your underwear, but you won’t need a full pad or tampon — possibly not for many months!

Cramps

It’s no secret that early pregnancy causes a rapid shift of hormones. More specifically, implantation is a trigger for the hormone surge — that’s why you can’t get that second pink line on a home pregnancy test until after implantation.

And the changing hormonal tide can also cause cramping. Furthermore, there’s a lot going on in your uterus as the fertilized egg implants and begins to grow.

While there’s no research indicating that implantation itself causes cramps, some women do feel abdominal tenderness, lower back pain, or cramping around the time of implantation. This may seem like a mild version of how you feel before your period starts.

Discharge

Let’s talk about what’s going on down there.

If you’ve been monitoring your cervical mucus, good work, future mama! Being aware of what’s going on with your body can be empowering when trying to conceive.

You may notice some cervical mucus changes around the time of implantation.

During ovulation, your cervical mucus will be clear, stretchy, and slippery (sort of like egg whites). You probably already know this as your green light to get your baby dance on.

After implantation occurs, your mucus might have a thicker, “gummier” texture and be clear or white in color.

And in the days of early pregnancy, rising progesterone and estrogen may cause your mucus to become even thicker, more profuse, and white or yellow in color.

We hate to say it, though: Cervical mucus can be affected by a number of things (hormones, stress, intercourse, pregnancy, implantation bleeding or your period, etc.) and may not be a reliable indicator of whether or not implantation has occurred.

Start tracking your cervical mucus while you’re not pregnant, and a more useful indicator may be how different it is from your norm during each stage of your cycle.

Bloating

Rising progesterone (which happens in early pregnancy) slows your digestive system down. This can make you feel bloated. But as so many of us know, this feeling can be a really common symptom of your period, too. Want to know why? Progesterone also rises when your period is imminent. Thanks, hormones.

\*Tender breasts

After implantation, levels of hCG, estrogen, and progesterone all increase rapidly. This can cause your boobs to feel very sore, swellen or tender