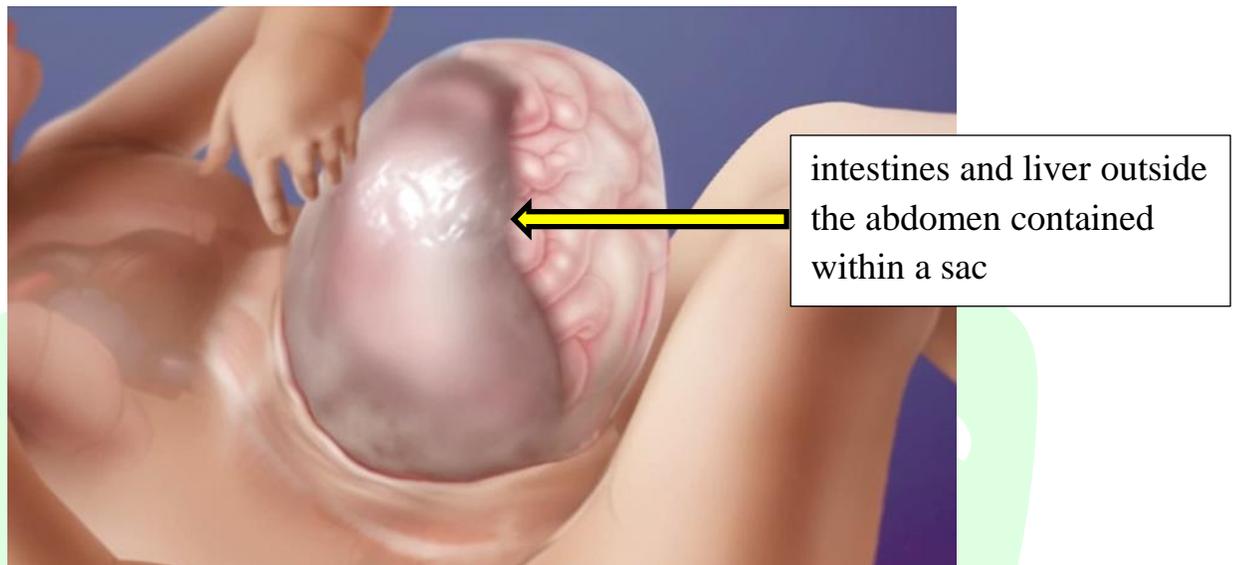


1. What is an omphalocele?



Exomphalos (also known as omphalocele) is a defect in the abdominal wall where in the baby's abdomen fails to close around the base of the umbilical cord. This means that some organs develop outside the abdomen. It is usually just the intestine that is outside the abdomen, but sometimes the liver and other organs can also develop outside the baby's abdomen. The organs outside the abdomen are contained within a sac which is usually covered in a protective membrane, so it is like a balloon at the base of the umbilical cord.

2. What is the cause?

The cause is unknown. It is not due to anything you have or have not done.

3. What are the associated complications?

Chromosomal/ genetic abnormalities may be seen in upto 30-50% of the cases which can be confirmed by doing an invasive testing like chorionic villus sampling or amniocentesis. Also other defects like cardiac defects may be seen on the ultrasound examination.

4. Is there any treatment?



All babies with exomphalos need an operation after they are born. Your specialist doctor (pediatric surgeon) will talk to you about the type of treatment your baby will need after birth.

5. Is there anything to be done during the pregnancy?

If there are no associated chromosomal/genetic problems you will be asked to have a follow up scan every 4 weeks to monitor the growth of the baby.

5. What is the outlook for the baby?

The outlook for your baby depends on whether your baby just has an exomphalos or also has other disorders.

- If your baby just has an exomphalos there is a 90% (9 in 10) chance of them surviving.
- If your baby has other associated disorders, they may only have a 10% (1 in 10) chance of surviving depending on how serious the other disorders are.

7. How likely is it to happen in the future pregnancy?

If there are no associated disorders, you are much more likely to have a normal, healthy baby in your next pregnancy. There is no way to prevent this condition. Even when there are other disorders, the chance of your next baby having an exomphalos is also likely to be low, unless it is associated with chromosomal or genetic disorders in which case you will be referred to a Geneticist to discuss the chances of recurrence and your options in future pregnancies.

