

# Women's experiences of diagnosis and treatment in caesarean scar ectopic pregnancy: a qualitative study

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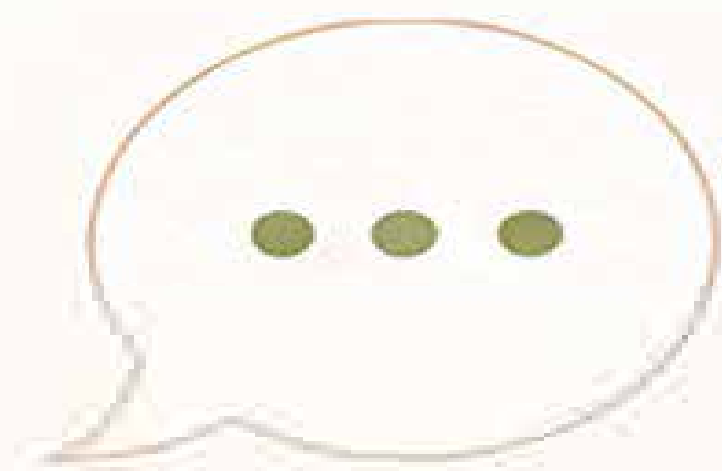
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## 1 Introduction

### Objective

This study aimed to explore women's lived experiences of diagnosis, treatment and recovery following surgically managed caesarean scar ectopic pregnancy (CSEP).



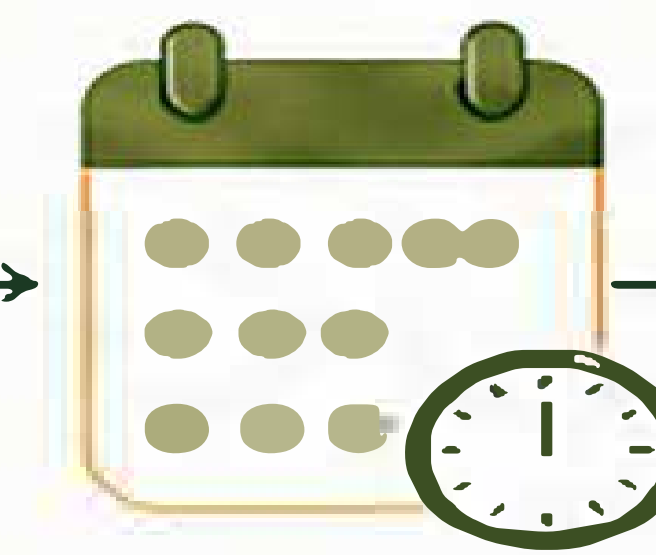
## 2 Methods

A qualitative study was conducted using semi-structured interviews with 15 women recruited between August 2023 and May 2025.

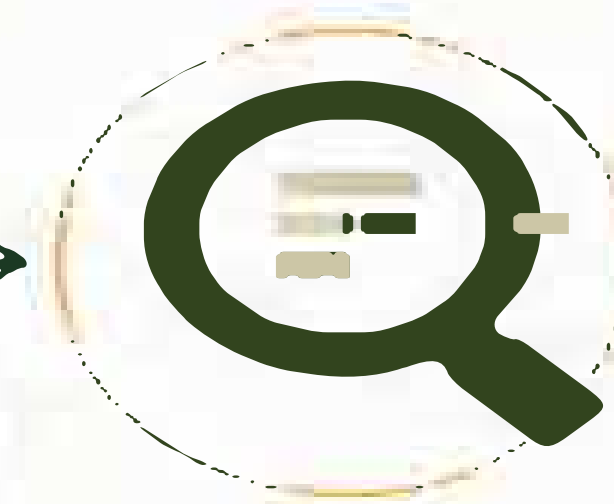
Interviews were conducted approximately 3 months following diagnosis and analysed using interpretative phenomenological analysis to explore how women made sense of their experiences.



Semi-structured interviews



~3 months post-diagnosis



Interpretative phenomenological analysis

## 3 Results: Five Interconnected Themes

1. Destabilised pregnancy: epistemic, embodied and temporal disruption

5. Living forward with vigilance and reconstructed meaning



2. Survival reorganising the meaning of pregnancy

3. Constrained moral action under conditions of necessity

4. Recognition and containment within medical and relational systems

## 4 Results: Illustrative Theme Quotations

1. Destabilised pregnancy: epistemic, embodied and temporal disruption



“I’m still clearly pregnant, but I am bleeding.”

— Claire



2. Survival reorganising the meaning of pregnancy

“What we really need... is to be told I’m not going to die.”

— Sarah



3. Constrained moral action under conditions of necessity

“I looked at it as a decision I had to make but it wasn’t really a decision.”

— Leah



4. Recognition and containment within medical and relational systems

“Once I was under the care of the specialist team... I felt quite safe.”

— Sarah



5. Living forward with vigilance and reconstructed meaning

“Hope survives, but it’s different now.”

— Hannah

## 5 Conclusions



Surgically managed CSEP represents a significant disruption to expected pregnancy experiences, extending beyond pregnancy loss alone. The experience is characterised by uncertainty, perceived threat to maternal life and morally constrained decision-making, with ongoing implications for identity, reproductive meaning and future orientation.

## 6 Clinical Implications



- Ensure timely access to specialist, multidisciplinary care with clear and consistent communication.
- Acknowledge emotional impact and validate women's experiences
- Integrate psychological support into follow-up pathways.