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EXTRA-UTERINE PREGNANCY.*

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Extra-uterine pregnancy or ectopic gestation is the fixation and development of an impregnated ovum outside of the uterus.

Many varieties of this abnormal condition have been described. The tubo-ovarian, tubo-abdominal and some other varieties involve such a nicety of diagnosis, except to the pathologist, as to be inappreciable. The three principal varieties are the tubal, interstitial and abdominal.

In tubal pregnancy, the impregnated ovum has fixed itself in the Fallopian tube or at its fimbriated extremity. This variety has been described as perhaps the most dangerous of extra-uterine pregnancies.

Interstitial pregnancy consists in the fixation of the ovum at the entrance of the tube into the uterine tissue and as it develops it extends partly towards the uterine cavity and partly towards the abdominal.

In abdominal pregnancy either the tube holding the impregnated ovum separates its attachment to the ovary, falls into the abdomen and remains there, the ovum developing by further attachments to the peritoneum, or, as some suppose, the ovum falls from the tube and is nourished by the peritoneum alone, without any assistance from the lining membrane of the uterus.

The cause of extra-uterine pregnancy is generally, if not universally admitted to be an obstruction to the passage of the impregnated ovum along the Fallopian tube, caused either by the growth of small a tumour

*Paper opening the discussion in Midwifery, Nova Scotia Medical Society Meeting, July, 1897.