

# | Starting your Egg | Freezing journey



| **CREATE<sup>™</sup>**  
**Fertility**

**Egg Freezing Guide**

Pioneers of Natural and Mild IVF

Call 0333 240 7300

[www.createfertility.co.uk](http://www.createfertility.co.uk)

# Getting started

Making the decision to freeze your eggs can be a reassuring and empowering step that helps you to preserve your fertility for your future plans. We are here to support you with your decision, whilst making the process of your treatment as simple and as stress free as we possibly can. It's important to us that you feel well informed about each step of your journey, and that you're feeling happy with the care you receive from us throughout your treatment.

This booklet is intended as a guide to help you through each stage of your egg freezing treatment with us, answering questions that you may have along the way. Although this booklet does not replace your tailored protocol that our clinicians have given you, it can be used as a guide to refer to, tick off checklists for your appointments and to keep track of your journey.

Our attentive and compassionate team are always here to help you feel comfortable during your treatment, with your best interests and chances of success at heart.

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# Times and practicalities

We know that it can be difficult trying to fit fertility treatment around a busy schedule, so it's important to know which times of the day our support line is open so that you know when you can speak to an advisor about your different appointments.

The **patient support number** will take you through to our team of patient advisors who are here to answer your questions throughout treatment, advise you, give you test results and book in your appointments.\*

**Patient support number: 0333 240 7300**

Monday to Friday	8am – 6pm
Saturday	9am – 5pm
Sunday	9am – 2pm

**Email: [support@createfertility.co.uk](mailto:support@createfertility.co.uk)**

Our support number and email are intended to help you achieve a quick resolution for queries and actions that you need us to help you with. We will always aim to resolve your enquiry as quickly as possible. Usually, queries are answered within the same working day; however, it may take longer if your query needs to be passed on to relevant teams for more specific medical information.

If you are experiencing a medical emergency **out of clinic hours**, please call the **emergency number** that one of our clinicians gave to you at the beginning of treatment. Please ensure that you save this number to your mobile contacts so that you have this to hand if you need to use it.

In case you lose the out-of-hours number, it can be found on our website via our contact page ([www.createfertility.co.uk/contact](http://www.createfertility.co.uk/contact)).

**\*Please note:** our patient support line has different opening times to our clinic opening times. You will be advised on when to come in for your appointments.

# Monitoring scans and blood tests

Throughout your treatment cycle, you will have a number of scans and blood tests to monitor your cycle. Your scans will be carried out by our highly trained clinicians, who will record your response to medication and ensure that you are as comfortable as possible throughout the process.

At each of these appointments you will be given the date for your next scan, so you don't need to worry about booking these in each time.

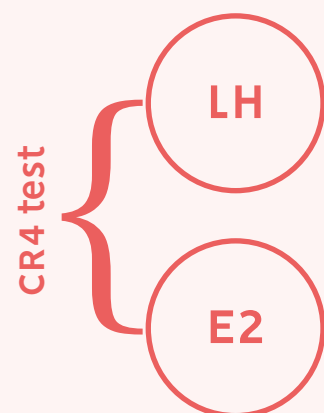
## When should I book my first scan?

After your Treatment Consultation, we ask that you call us on Day 1 of your cycle before 4pm to book your first scan. Day 1 is the first day of your cycle, which is the first day of your period when you have a full bleed.

## What do I need to know about treatment scans?

- Typically, you will have around 3–4 scans
- Scans are usually spaced 2 days apart (e.g. Day 6, Day 8 and Day 10), but this can vary depending on the development of your follicles
- Each scan lasts between 10–20 minutes
- The clinician will decide at the scan whether you need a blood test

## What kind of blood tests might the clinician recommend?



### LH test:

This stands for luteinizing hormone. There is a brief surge in LH levels before you ovulate, as a message is sent to your ovaries to release an egg. During IVF, we want to make sure that your LH is suppressed, to prevent premature ovulation.

### E2 test:

This is the abbreviation of oestradiol hormone which is one of the 3 subtypes of oestrogen. E2 is exclusively produced by growing follicles; thus, the blood E2 level is a reflection of follicular health. A very high E2 level warns us of the risk of OHSS.

**CR4** tests for the two hormones: luteinizing hormone and oestrogen. Your clinician may ask you to have this blood test after a scan.

# FAQs on scans and blood tests

## Do I need to bring anything to my scans?

No, you do not need to bring anything along to your treatment scans unless the clinician has specifically asked for extra information.

## Can I have intercourse in between scans and during treatment?

We advise that you abstain throughout the course of your treatment.

## Is it safe to wear a tampon during my period before treatment?

There is a risk of infection if you forget to remove your tampon. To be on the safe side, we advise you to use sanitary towels instead.

## If I need to have additional blood tests on the day of my scan, how can I make payment?

Throughout your treatment, your clinician may ask you to have additional blood tests depending on how you are responding to treatment. In this circumstance, we take payment by debit or credit card on a pay-as-you-go basis (we do not accept cash or AMEX). If you have bought a Support Package, however, all blood tests have been paid for upfront





## Call backs with the clinician

Throughout your treatment you will have short appointments with the clinician called 'call backs'. These are brief phone calls that can be arranged by the clinician to discuss test results and/or short queries.

### Monitoring blood tests:

After you have had a blood test with your treatment scan, the clinician may call you if any changes need to be made to your protocol to ensure that they are always working with your body. However, if no alterations need to be made then you will not need to worry about receiving a call. Sometimes, clinicians may contact you after working hours.

**When should I expect to receive these kinds of calls?**  
**Monday – Friday after 4pm**

### Short queries and other results:

Call backs to receive test results (e.g. HyCoSy, blood tests) or to cover further short queries that you might have for the clinician after your appointment about treatment can also be arranged.

## FAQs

### If I have a blood test with my scan and I do not receive a call back, should I worry?

No, you should only be expecting a call back from the clinician if they decide that adjustments need to be made to your protocol.

Receiving no call means that everything is as it should be, and no adjustments need to be made to your treatment.

### What happens if I miss a call?

In the case that you miss a call from one of our clinicians, please call the number back as soon as possible, if it is before 5pm. If it is not a medical emergency, you can call our patient support number back the next morning, and you will be advised on when you can rebook the phone appointment.

In the case of a medical emergency occurring out-of-hours, please call the emergency number and the clinician who is carrying the phone will advise you on your next steps (refer to page 3 for contact details).

### What if I need to cover more than a couple of questions with the clinician?

If you would like to discuss any questions about your treatment in detail, then we advise that you make a 30-minute follow-up appointment with the clinician. These are chargeable appointments.

## Medication delivery service

### How do I receive my medication?

At CREATE we work in partnership with a medication home delivery service called Fertility2U. In your Treatment Consultation, the nurses talked you through your prescription, how to take your medication and the process of your treatment.

Your first order of medication is intended to last the course of your cycle and can be delivered to an address of your choice.

### What if I need to change the time for my medication to be delivered?

If there is any change in your circumstances, and you need to change the time for the delivery of your medication, please call Fertility2U's direct line:

**01827 818 321**

We can only dispense medication from our clinic for emergency 'top-ups' and post-scan prescriptions from the clinician.

### Delivery times:

**Monday to Friday**  
8am – 1pm



**Saturday delivery** (surcharge may apply)  
8am – 1pm



**Please note:** Delivery times may vary depending on your postal area.

To have your medication delivered on a Saturday, an additional surcharge may apply.

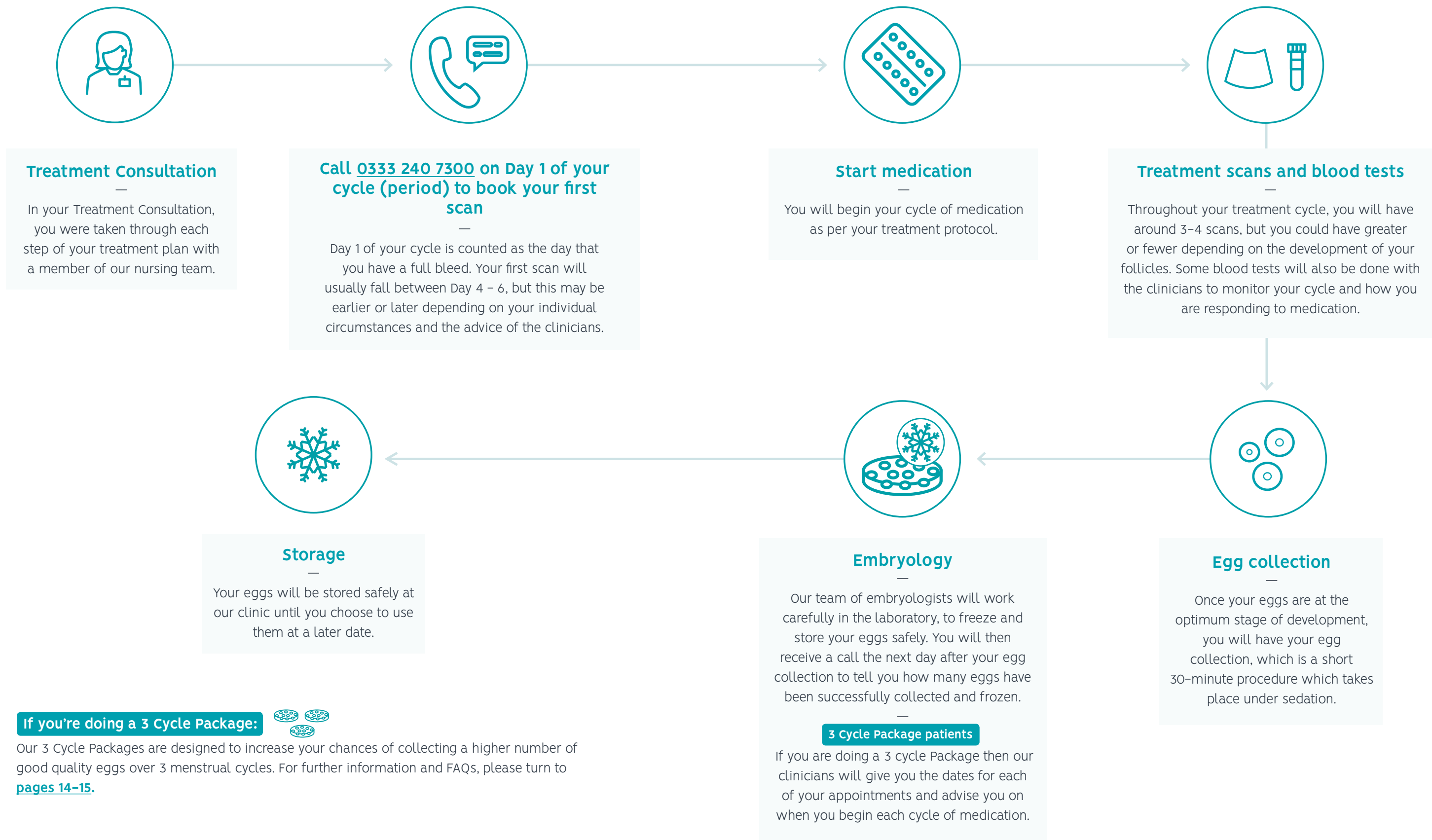


**Storage:** When you have your medication delivered to your chosen address, please ensure that you have access to a fridge as soon as the medication arrives, because some it may need to be refrigerated.

Please note: any medication that needs to be refrigerated cannot be delivered on a Monday.

# My treatment timetable

The cycle outline below is a guide only. Please remember, your treatment protocol is tailored to your circumstances and may differ to what is outlined here. In addition, changes to your protocol may be made during treatment depending on the advice of the clinicians.



# Types of medication

## FSH

### Follicle stimulation:

FSH stands for 'Follicle Stimulating Hormone'. This is a naturally occurring hormone that is produced by the pituitary gland. It is a key part of the menstrual cycle, as it grows the follicles ready for release. We will give you this in the form of an injection, in order to stimulate your ovaries. Some examples of brands this may come in include:

• Bemfola • Gonal F • Menopur

## GnRH ANTAGONISTS

### GnRH Antagonists:

These are types of medication that are used to suppress LH and spontaneous ovulation. You will be given this in the form of an injection. Some examples of brands this may come in include:

• Cetrotide • Orgalutran

## TRIGGER

### Trigger:

A trigger shot is an injection of synthetic human chorionic gonadotropin (hCG), which is a hormone medication used to stimulate the maturation of follicles and trigger ovulation. Some examples of brands this may come in include:

• Ovitrelle • Buserelin (GnRH agonist)

## OTHER

### Other potential medication:

You may be required to take other medications during or after your treatment. If this is the case, our clinicians will talk you through all of the details that you need to know, and they will answer any questions that you might have.

# FAQs about medication

### What time should I take my medication?

Medication should be taken at roughly the same time every day. We advise that you take your medication after 7pm for routine purposes, unless the clinician has instructed otherwise.

### Where can I order my medication from?

You can order your medication directly through us at reception. We ensure that you are receiving the best value for your money as one of the lowest cost providers of medication (lower than Boots Pharmacy and Lloyds Pharmacy\*).

Additionally, we offer the following free of charge:

- Free sharps bins
- Free needles
- Free tutorials and medication support

Alternatively, you may choose to get a private prescription and purchase the medication yourself. However, you will also need to then purchase the needles and sharps bins from your pharmacist.

### How do I store my medication?

When you have your medication delivered to your address, please ensure that you have access to a fridge as soon as the medication arrives as some medication needs to be refrigerated.

Ensure that you check the box for details on how to store your medication. This will specify whether you need to store the medication in the **fridge** or at **room temperature**.



**Storage:** Ovitrelle and Cetrotide must be stored in the fridge as soon as it has been delivered. If it is left outside of the fridge for more than 2 hours this will affect the medication.

### What should I do if I experience side effects from the medication?

Some women experience side effects when going through treatment including: bloating, headaches and mood swings. Usually these are very common and there is nothing to worry about, but if you are concerned then we are here to answer your questions. Please turn over to the next page for more information on possible treatment side effects.

### What happens if I spill my medication when trying to inject myself?

If you spill your medication, it is best to call the emergency number, and the clinician who is carrying the phone will advise you on your next steps.

\*Prices reviewed in June 2018

## Possible side effects of medication

During your time in treatment, you may experience some common side effects from the medication you are taking. It's important to know that it is very normal to have some side effects and it is all part of the process. It may be the case that you do not have any of the below responses to medication, but every woman is different, and we know that it's always best to feel well prepared just in case you do.

- **Mood swings:** during your treatment, it is normal to experience mood swings because you will be taking different hormones into your body, which may cause some imbalances.
- **Anxiety:** dealing with infertility is an emotional challenge for many patients, so it is very normal to have feelings of anxiety around your treatment. If you feel that you need extra support, we offer counselling services throughout your time with us.
- **Headaches:** can be a common side effect from the medication. You may take a paracetamol to help, but it is important that you get advice from a nurse or a doctor if your headaches continue. We advise that you keep well hydrated and drink lots of water.
- **Tiredness:** can also be a feature of treatment, so it's important to make time for yourself to rest, and to stick to light exercise. We advise that you keep well hydrated and drink lots of water.
- **Nausea:** is rare but if you have it, we recommend you have smaller portions at meal times, reduce fatty and spicy foods, to eat little and often to combat low blood sugar levels and continue with drinking fluids regularly.
- Remember that when you take medication, there is a very small chance of having a severe allergic reaction. In this case, please go straight to calling A&E on [999](tel:999).
- You may also feel bloated during the stimulation phase.
- **Ovarian Hyperstimulation Syndrome (OHSS):** is very rare in Natural or Mild IVF, but if you are worried about experiencing symptoms, you can always call our patient support line, or our out-of-hours emergency number to speak with our clinicians who will advise you (refer to page 3).

### For women at risk of Ovarian Hyper Stimulation Syndrome (OHSS)

Mild OHSS can occur in about 30% of all stimulated IVF cycles.

Moderate to severe OHSS can occur in around 2-4% of IVF cycles and our protocols are aimed at preventing these forms.

If you have polycystic ovaries or polycystic ovarian syndrome (PCOS) you may be at risk of developing Ovarian Hyper Stimulation Syndrome (OHSS). We have a separate leaflet about OHSS. Please ask for this leaflet if you are concerned. If you are at risk of OHSS, you will receive the information and instructions regarding symptoms and preventions of OHSS by our clinical team during the course of your treatment.

## FAQs about side effects

### Should I take painkillers if I have a headache?

If you have a headache, it's important that you should use paracetamol as pain relief, **not** ibuprofen. Ibuprofen can affect your cycle, so it is essential that you do not take this at any point during your treatment. Most of our patients take paracetamol unless they have been advised otherwise by a nurse or doctor.

### Can I drink alcohol during treatment?

We recommend that you do not drink any alcohol throughout your course of treatment.

### Who should I contact if I am worried about the side effects that I'm experiencing?

If you are worried about the side effects that you are experiencing, call our patient support line and an advisor will put you through to one of our specialist nurses to talk through your next steps if any action needs to be taken.

Ovarian Hyperstimulation Syndrome (OHSS) is very rare in mild stimulation fertility treatment, but if you are worried about experiencing symptoms, you can always call our patient support line, or our out-of-hours emergency number to speak with our clinicians who will advise you (refer to page 3 for contact details).

We have a separate leaflet about OHSS. Please ask for this leaflet if you are concerned. If you are at risk of OHSS, you will receive information and instructions regarding symptoms and preventions of OHSS by our clinical team during the course of your treatment.

Remember that when you take medication, there is a very small chance of having a severe allergic reaction. In this case, please call A&E on [999](tel:999).





# Egg collection

An egg collection is a short procedure which takes place in the theatre under light sedation. You will be booked in for a 30–45 minute appointment and then one of our nurses will take you to recovery and you will rest until you feel well enough to go home.

## How to prepare:

- ☒ Screening, consent forms, blood tests and photo ID have to be on our system and your account must be fully paid.
- ☒ Do not eat anything 6 hours prior to your egg collection and do not drink anything 2 hours beforehand.
- ☒ Do not wear perfume, deodorant or make-up.
- ☒ You should also not wear contact lenses or jewellery.
- ☒ Do not wear acrylic nails or nail polish.
- ☒ Please bring your partner or friend to accompany you home as you will have undergone sedation.
- ☒ You should not drive after your egg collection and undergoing sedation, so ensure that you have organised an alternative mode of transport to get home.

## If you're part of a 3 Cycle Package

If you have chosen to do a 3 Cycle Package, you can complete your 3 cycles over the space of 12 months. Our 3 Cycle Package is designed to increase your chances of collecting a larger selection of good quality eggs over three menstrual cycles.

At the end of your 3 cycles, you will have a bank of eggs to choose from and to use at a later date.

# FAQs about egg collection

## Will I need to book the day off work for my egg collection?

Yes, we advise that you take the day off work. If your egg collection is in the afternoon then it is fine to go to work in the morning, but you will need the rest of the day off work after the procedure to recover.

## Will I be in pain after my egg collection?

It is normal to experience some mild pain in the lower abdominal area which will feel a bit like period pain, and it is normal to have a bit of spotting. This should only last for around 24 hours after the procedure. You can take paracetamol to help with the pain but not ibuprofen as this may affect your cycle.

If the pain or spotting continues, please call our patient support line or, if this occurs [out of our clinic opening hours](#), call our emergency number (refer to page 3 for contact details).

## When will I know what my results are?

The day after the egg collection the embryologist will call you the following day to inform you how many eggs have been collected and successfully frozen.

## How long can my eggs be stored for after my treatment?

Legally, we can keep your eggs in storage for up to 10 years. Please note: annual storage fees apply.

## Is it normal to experience bloating after my egg collection?

Yes, this is a common reaction that many patients have after egg collection, and usually there is nothing to worry about. If you are concerned about your symptoms, however, you can call the patient support line and speak to the nurse/doctor.

Or, if you are very worried and this occurs out of our clinic opening hours, please call our emergency number (refer to page 3).

## When is it OK to drive after my egg collection?

It is important that you do not drive or operate any machinery for 24 hours after your egg collection procedure.

## When can I go back to work?

We advise that you do not go back to work on the day of your egg collection. Please do not go back to work until you have fully recovered.

## FAQs about 3 Cycle Packages

### Does my 3 Cycle Package include the cost of storage for the eggs collected?

Yes, your treatment package includes the cost of 12 months of storage from the date that your eggs are frozen. For more information on the costs of further storage, please see our Price Guide.

### Can I have a break between my cycles?

Yes, if you decide that you would like a break between each cycle this is something that we can do. However, please be advised that you will need to complete all 3 cycles within 12 months.

### When will I receive my results after each egg collection?

The day after your egg collection, the embryologist will call you to inform you how many eggs have been collected and frozen successfully.



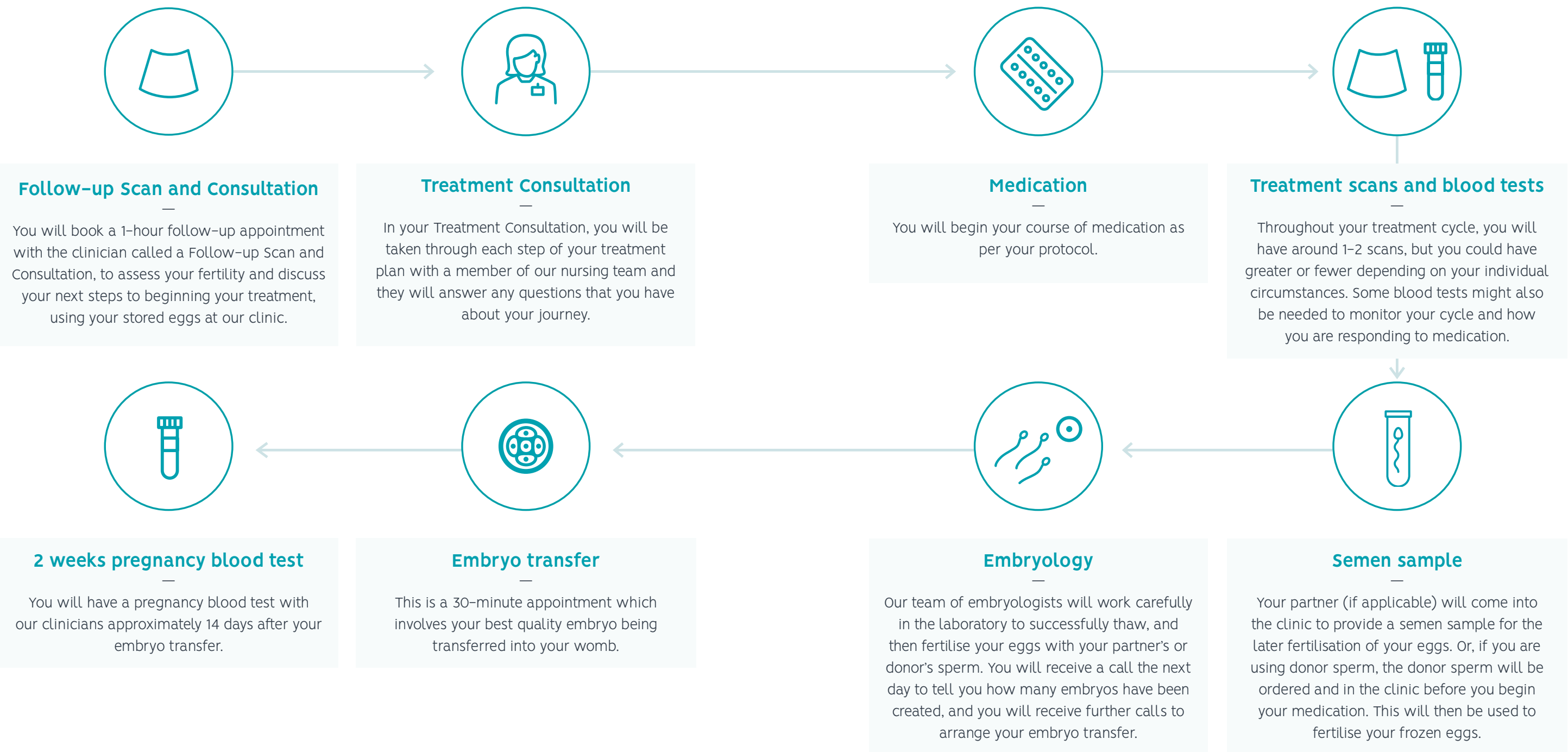
# On the day of egg collection



# What happens when you come back to use your eggs in the future?

If you come back to the clinic to use your eggs at a later date, your first appointment will be with one of our consultants who will welcome you back to discuss your next steps to begin treatment with your stored eggs. In this appointment, you will also have a follow-up scan so the consultant can determine the best treatment protocol for you. The treatment cycle that you will come for is called a Frozen Egg Thaw Transfer.

The cycle outline below is a guide only. Please remember, your treatment protocol is tailored to your circumstances and may differ to what is outlined here. In addition, changes to your protocol may be made during treatment depending on the advice of the clinicians.



## FAQs ?

### Do I need to re-do any blood tests when I come back?

Yes, you will need to re-do your blood screening tests again if they are more than 3 months out of date.

### How does it work if I need to use donor sperm?

If you choose to have treatment with donor sperm from our clinic, we will help match you to a suitable donor and fill in the required consent forms. Once we have found the right match and the sperm has been ordered, we will begin your Frozen Embryo Transfer cycle.

If you are using donor sperm from an outside source, they will give you advice on how to transfer this over to the clinic. We must also have this in the clinic before we can start your treatment.

# Lifestyle advice

A healthy mind promotes a healthy body, so aim to de-stress and relax. Continue with your interests and take part in activities that help to promote positive thinking. Improving your health and well-being prior to starting any fertility treatment will boost your natural fertility, minimise stress levels and will get your body ready for treatment.

### DIET:



- 1. Eat fruit and vegetables and foods that are good sources of protein
- 2. Reduce your saturated fat and sugar intake
- 3. Top up your Omega-3 levels
- 4. Vitamin supplements (particularly vitamin D) may help to give extra support
- 5. Drink plenty of fluids

### LIFESTYLE:

- 1. Stop smoking
- 2. Avoid alcohol
- 3. Reduce your caffeine intake
- 4. Getting a good night's sleep
- 5. If your BMI is above or below average, we advise for our patients to aim to get to a healthy weight



### DE-STRESS TIPS:

- 1. Doing light exercise
- 2. Taking regular breaks
- 3. Walks in the outdoors
- 4. Deep breathing exercises
- 5. Arrange treats for yourself

# Our commitment to you

We hope that this guide has helped to answer lots of the questions that you have about your treatment. We want you to feel as comfortable and as confident about your journey as possible. Our team are happy to answer your questions and reassure you along the way. We are here to support you throughout your treatment with us, and we promise to work with your body and your needs all the way through your treatment.

*Geeta Nargund*

Professor Geeta Nargund  
Founder and Medical Director – CREATE Fertility



## Notes

## Notes





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Pioneers of Natural and Mild IVF

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[www.createfertility.co.uk](http://www.createfertility.co.uk)

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