

# Starting your Intrauterine Insemination (IUI) journey



CREATE<sup>™</sup>  
Fertility

Intrauterine Insemination (IUI) Guide

Pioneers of Natural and Mild IVF

Call 0333 240 7300

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

# Getting started

When beginning your IUI treatment, we know that you might have some questions about how your treatment will progress. This booklet is intended as a guide to help you through each stage by providing you with some of those answers. Although this 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.

We want to make the process of your treatment as simple and as stress free as possible, so it's important to us that you feel well informed about each step. Our attentive and compassionate team will always work alongside you, helping 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.

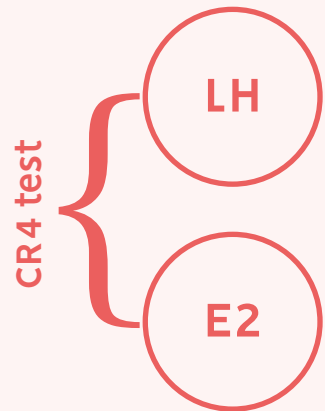
## When should I book my first scan?

After your Treatment Consultation, we ask that you call us on Day 1 of your cycle 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. The clinician will decide at the scan whether you need a blood test.

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

- Typically, you will have around 2-3 scans
- Each scan lasts approximately 20 minutes
- The clinician will decide at the scan whether you need a blood test

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



**LH:**  
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. This is an important test for the clinicians to determine when you will have your IUI procedure.

**E2:**  
This stands for oestradiol test. This measures the amount of oestradiol in your blood, which is a form of the hormone oestrogen.

**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 nurse or clinician has specifically asked for extra information.

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

Where appropriate we advise that you abstain for 3-4 days before the IUI procedure.

## 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.

## Should I bring my partner (if applicable) with me to my scans?

If you have a partner, you might find it helpful for them to come along to your monitoring appointments for support. If you would like to bring a friend or a family member for support, you are welcome to do so if it helps you to feel more comfortable.

## 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.

## 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. If no alterations need to be made, you will not need to worry about receiving a call. Sometimes, our 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, such as semen analysis results (if applicable), 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.

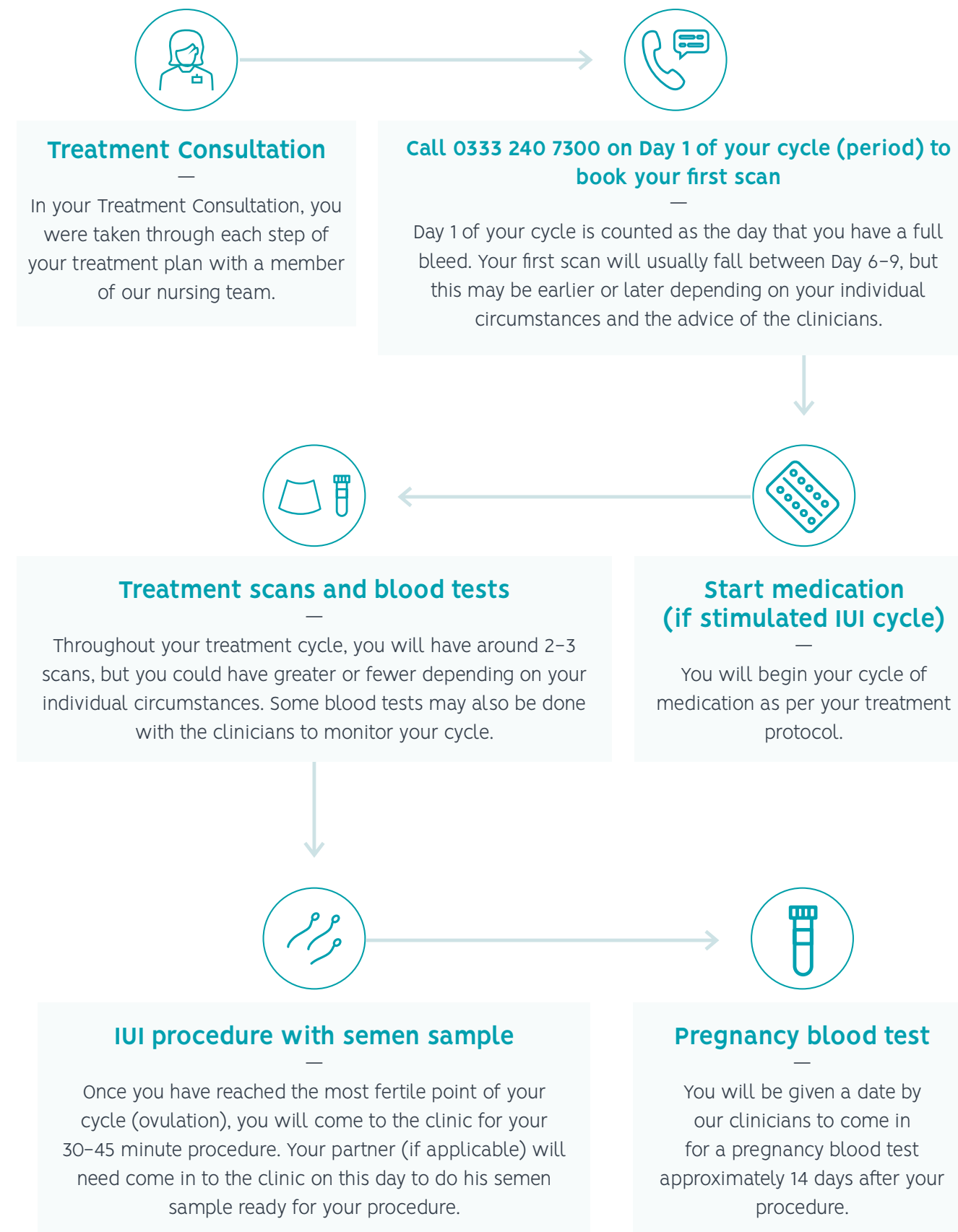
In the case of a medical emergency occurring out-of-hours, please call the emergency number and the clinician who is carrying the phone will advise you on your next steps (refer to page 3 for contact details).

### 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.

# 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.



## Ordering donor sperm (if applicable):

During your Treatment Consultation, if you are using donor sperm, you will have talked with our nurses about the process of finding a suitable match with you and how you can make the order. Once your donor sperm has been delivered to the clinic, you will then be able to begin your treatment.

## FAQs

### What if I don't get a surge?

If you do not have a luteinizing hormone (LH) surge, you will need to inform the clinic and come in for a provisional scan that will have been booked by our clinicians in advance.

### What if my donor sperm (if applicable) does not arrive in time for when I need to call in for my first scan?

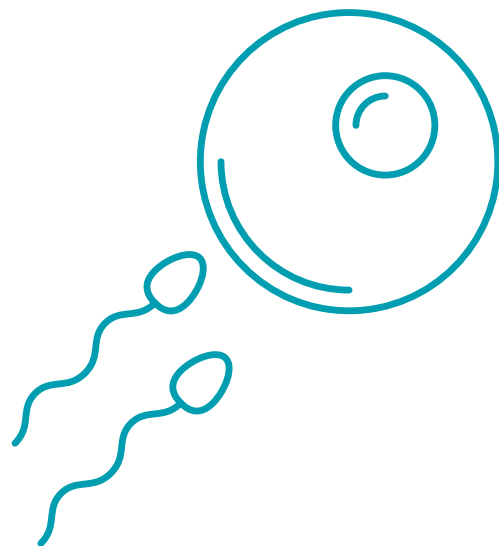
If your donor sperm has not arrived in time for Day 1 of your cycle when you call into the clinic, you will not be able to start treatment on this cycle because we need to ensure that it is ready for your IUI procedure.

### Will I need to take any time off work?

Depending on your work schedule, it is likely that you will need to take a short amount of time off work for your 30-minute scans and your 45-minute IUI procedure appointment. However, because the procedure does not require going under sedation, there is no recovery time needed and you may return back to work as soon as you feel ready.

### Is there anything that I can do to increase my chances of success?

There are some simple things that you can do to prepare yourself for treatment to keep your mind and body feeling healthy throughout your journey. Whilst there is no 100% guarantee that treatment will be successful, there are some easy lifestyle tips and changes that you can take to make your journey easier. (turn to page 17 for further details).



## Stimulated IUI

If you are doing a stimulated IUI cycle, our clinicians will give you a tailored treatment plan that is suited to your individual circumstances. This may include the following types of medication:

### FSH

#### Follicle stimulation:

FSH stands for 'Follicle Stimulating Hormone'. This is a naturally occurring hormone which 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 tablets, in order to stimulate your ovaries.

### CLOMID TAMOXIFEN

#### Clomid/tamoxifen:

Clomiphene citrate or tamoxifen tablets may be given for 4–5 days at the beginning of your treatment cycle in order to stimulate your ovaries.

### 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**

### LUTEAL SUPPORT

#### Luteal support:

This is a term to describe the administration of fertility medication that is given to support implantation. Some examples of brands this may come in include:

• **Utrogestan** • **Cyclogest**

### 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.

# 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 of it may need to be refrigerated.

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

# 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 that you may be experiencing symptoms, 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 patient support line if it is during clinic opening hours, and they will pass you on to a clinician. If this happens out-of-hours you will need to 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).

\*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; however, 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**.
- You may also feel bloated during the stimulation phase.

## FAQs

### 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 (refer to page 3 for contact details).

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**.

# IUI procedure

An IUI procedure is a short 30–45 minute appointment which involves directly inserting specially washed sperm into the womb at the most fertile point of a woman's cycle. Our clinicians will ensure that you are feeling comfortable and ready for the procedure when you come for your appointment. Before you come to your appointment, there are a few things you'll need to do in preparation to make sure that there are no delays, and the procedure goes as smoothly as possible.

## How to prepare:

- ☒ Ensure that you have signed all of the relevant consent forms prior to the procedure.
- ☒ All required screening has been done.
- ☒ Please do not wear any perfumes or deodorants.
- ☒ Come with a comfortably full bladder.
- ☒ If applicable, please arrange child care for the day of your procedure as the recovery and theatre area are not suitable for children (Health & Safety Regulations).

## Your partner (if applicable):

- ☒ If your partner's sperm is being used in the treatment, he will need to attend this appointment to produce a sample.
- ☒ Please allow a minimum of 2 days and a maximum of 5 days abstinence to ensure that the sperm is of high quality.



## On the day of your procedure



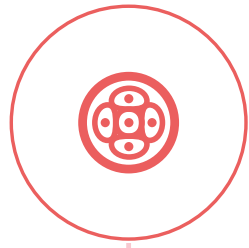
### Walk in to theatre

You will be welcomed back to the clinic and taken through to the theatre room.



### The clinician will explain how your procedure will follow

We will tell you about the process of the procedure, ensuring that you know what to expect during the appointment.



### 30-minute IUI procedure

The IUI procedure is a straightforward 30-minute appointment that is usually painless.



### Witness the sperm is the right sperm sample

As part of clinical practice, you will be shown the sperm sample prior to the procedure.



### You can ask the clinician any questions

Your clinician will answer any questions that you might have about the procedure and your next steps.

### Stimulated IUI:

If you are doing a stimulated IUI protocol, the clinicians will talk you through the medication that you may need to take after your procedure.

## FAQs about your procedure

### Is the procedure painful?

The IUI procedure is usually painless, and it does not require sedation unless this has been discussed with your clinician prior to the procedure for medical reasons.

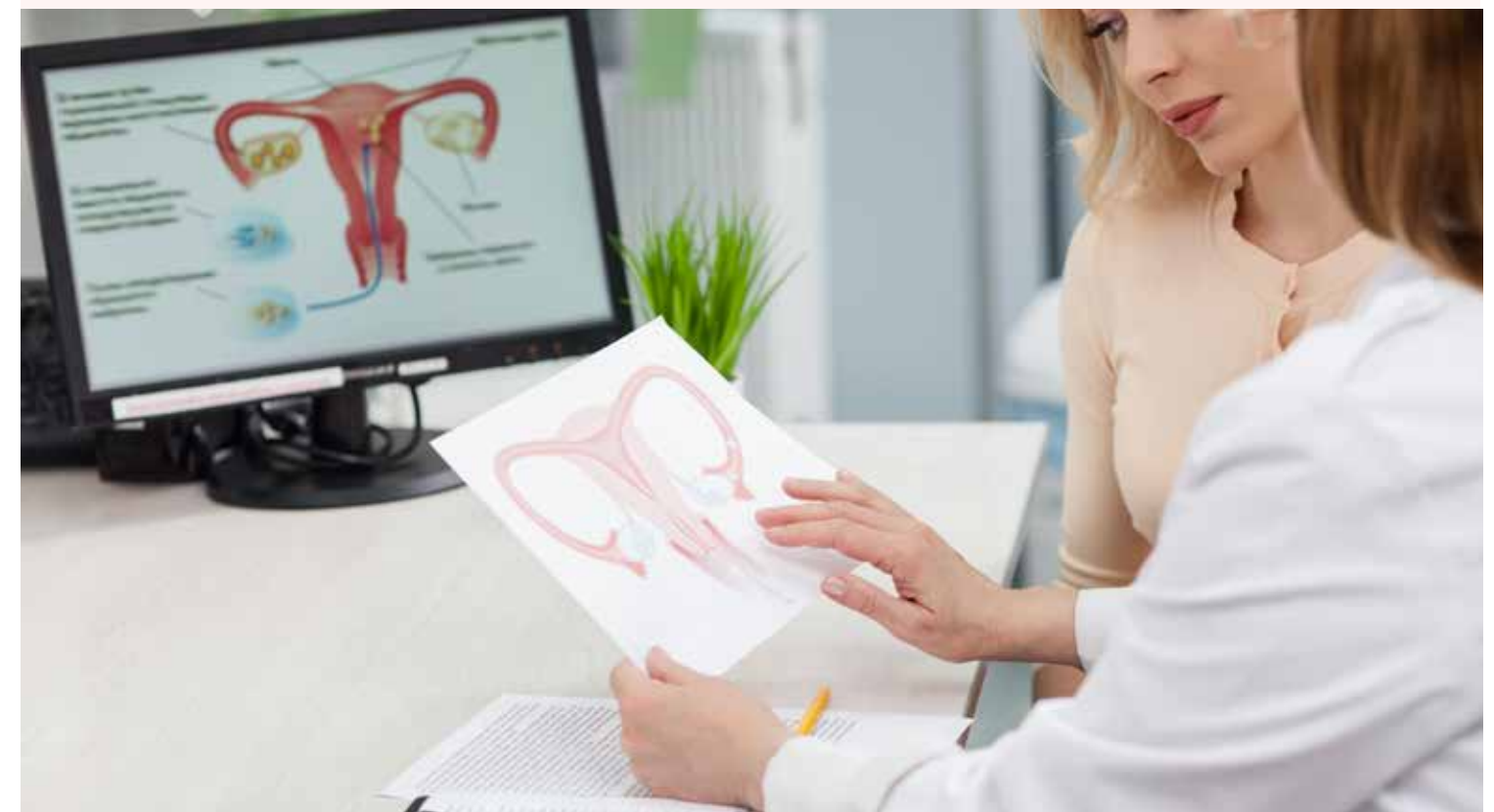
### When can I go back to work?

Unless you have undergone sedation for the procedure due to medical reasons discussed with the clinicians, you can return to work straight after the appointment, providing that you are comfortable doing so.

If you have undergone sedation for the appointment, it is important for your own health and safety that you do not drive or operate any heavy machinery for 24 hours after the appointment. We advise that you do not go back to work on the day of your procedure. Please do not go back to work until you have fully recovered.

### When will I know what my results are?

At your IUI appointment, you will be given a date to take your home pregnancy urine test, approximately 16 days after the procedure. Generally, it takes around 3-4 minutes for the test results to fully develop but this may differ depending on the type of test, so it's always best to check the box.





## Treatment with donated sperm

If you are having treatment with donor sperm, one of our specialist nurses will have discussed our UK and international donor services with you at your consultation. We recruit our own sperm donors and we also transport donor sperm from other recognised and licensed donor banks.

All of our sperm donors have to be in good health and are screened for sexually transmitted infections and some genetic disorders. The sperm is always assessed as high quality before being approved for donation.

You will be given details of your donor's:

☒ Height ☒ Weight ☒ Hair colour ☒ Eye colour ☒ Ethnicity

### What if I'm using donor sperm from another clinic?

If you are using donor sperm from an outside source you will have been advised you on how to transfer this over to the clinic. In the case that your donor sperm has not arrived in time for day 1 of your cycle when you call into the clinic, you will not be able to start treatment on this cycle as it will need to be ready for your IUI procedure.

### What if I'm using a known sperm donor?

If you are using a known donor, they will have completed the following stages:

#### Stage 1:

- Semen analysis
- Freeze
- Test results

#### Stage 2:

- Medical consultation
- Genetic and implication counselling

#### Stage 3:

- Pre-screening

#### Stage 4:

- Sample collection, quarantine and release

### What if I feel like I need someone to talk to about using a donor for my treatment?

If you feel that you would benefit from further counselling during your treatment, our counselling services are always available at any stage of your treatment cycle. This can help you to manage difficult emotions, thoughts and feelings that you could be having in relation your situation.

## What if my treatment cycle is unsuccessful?

In the case that your treatment is not successful, we would like you to attend a 30-minute Review Consultation. This appointment is free of charge. You may want to have some time to process this before you come to us for your appointment, as we know that this can be an upsetting time.

We also offer our counselling services to support you throughout your treatment if you feel that this would be helpful.

When you are ready to come back to the clinic, in the 30-minute appointment you will be able to discuss your next steps with the clinician.



# Lifestyle advice

A healthy mind promotes a healthy body, so aim to de-stress and relax. Continue with your interests and give yourself permission to have fun regularly without feeling guilty. Taking part in activities that promote positive thinking can help to relieve your fertility worries.

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.



### MEDICAL:

- It is a medical requirement that patients trying to conceive should be taking 400 micrograms (mcg) of Folic Acid each day.



### 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 all the way through your time with us.

We wish you every luck with your treatment.

*Geeta Nargund*

Professor Geeta Nargund  
Founder and Medical Director – CREATE Fertility





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