



Starting your Egg Donation journey



CREATE[™]
Fertility

Egg Donation Guide

Pioneers of Natural and Mild IVF

Call 0333 240 7300

www.createfertility.co.uk

Getting started

We want to make the process of your treatment as simple, and as stress free as possible. It's important to us that you feel well informed about each step of your journey, and that you're feeling confident and 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 treatment with us, answering lots of the 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.

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What's the next step after your ERIC appointment?

During your Egg Recipient Initial Consultation (ERIC) appointment with our specialist egg donation team, you looked at donor matching forms and we talked about how our egg donation programme follows. We understand that finding the right match for you is very important, so it's our priority to work with your requirements, ensuring that you are happy.

The waiting time can vary depending on your individual characteristics and any specific requirements that you might make. We acknowledge that this time can be emotionally challenging and may raise some difficult thoughts and questions. For this reason, we always recommend that you have a session of implications counselling with a trained counsellor before you start your treatment.



What should I do once I've decided to go ahead with treatment?

If you decide that you would like to go ahead with treatment, your first step is to call our friendly patient support team to let us know, and the process will begin as follows:



International programme:

If you decide to go ahead with our international programme, your egg donation nurse will act as your liaison between your international clinic and our clinic.

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

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** which 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).

***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.

Treatment scans and blood tests

In preparation for your embryo transfer, you will have around 2–3 treatment scans with our team, but you could have greater or fewer depending on your individual circumstances. You may also be asked to do some blood tests for additional information. Your scans will be carried out by our highly trained clinicians, who will record your response to medication, ensuring that you are as comfortable as possible throughout the process.

What do I need to know about treatment scans?

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

FAQs

Do I need to bring anything to my scans?

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

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 receive short phone calls with the egg donation team. These calls are made to keep you updated on your donor's cycle and how things are progressing, so that you're always feeling involved throughout the process.

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. If no alterations need to be made, you will not need to worry about receiving a call.

When should I expect to receive these kinds of calls?
Between 8:30am – 6:00pm

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.

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:

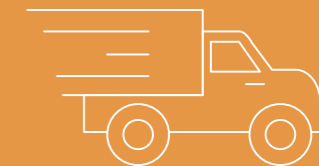
01827 818 321

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

Delivery times:

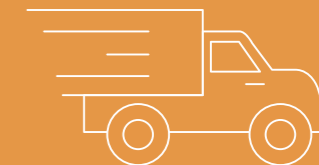
Monday to Friday

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.

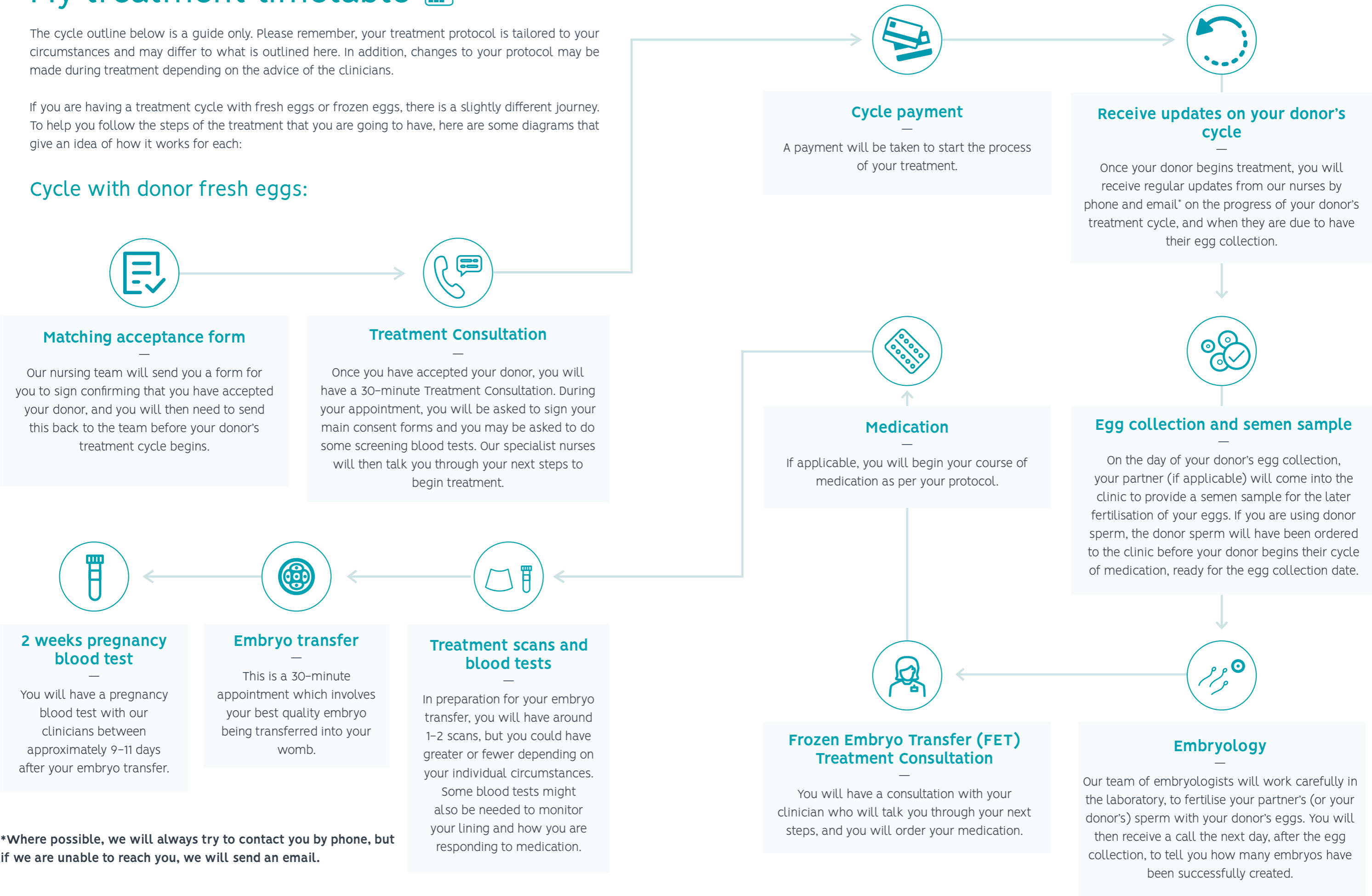
Please note: any medication that needs to be refrigerated cannot be delivered on a Monday.

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.

If you are having a treatment cycle with fresh eggs or frozen eggs, there is a slightly different journey. To help you follow the steps of the treatment that you are going to have, here are some diagrams that give an idea of how it works for each:

Cycle with donor fresh eggs:



*Where possible, we will always try to contact you by phone, but if we are unable to reach you, we will send an email.

Cycle with donor frozen eggs



Matching acceptance form

Our nursing team will send you a form for you to sign confirming that you have accepted your donor, and you will then need to send this back to the team before your donor's treatment cycle begins.



Treatment Consultation

Once you have accepted your donor, you will have a 30-minute Treatment Consultation. During your appointment, you will be asked to sign your main consent forms and you may be asked to do some screening blood tests. Our specialist nurses will then talk you through your next steps to begin treatment.



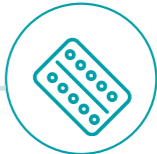
Cycle payment

A payment will be taken to start the process of your treatment.



Fresh Embryo Transfer (FET) Treatment Consultation

You will have a consultation with your clinician who will talk you through the treatment process, and you will order your medication.



Medication

You will begin your course of medication as per your protocol.



Treatment scans and blood tests

In preparation for your embryo transfer, you will have around 1-2 scans, but you could have greater or fewer depending on your individual circumstances. Some blood tests might also be needed to monitor your lining and how you are responding to medication.



Thaw and semen sample

Your donor eggs will be thawed, and your partner (if applicable) will come into the clinic to provide a semen sample for the later fertilisation of your eggs. If you are using donor sperm, the donor sperm will have been ordered to the clinic before your donor begins their cycle of medication, ready for the egg collection date.



Embryology

Our team of embryologists will work carefully in the laboratory, to fertilise your partner's (or your donor's) sperm with your donor's eggs. You will then receive a call the next day, after the egg collection, to tell you how many embryos have been successfully created.



Embryo transfer

This is a 30-minute appointment which involves your best quality embryo being transferred into your womb.



2 weeks pregnancy blood test

You will have a pregnancy blood test with our clinicians between approximately 9-11 days after your embryo transfer.

Please note:

Unfortunately, not all cycles will successfully proceed to the embryo transfer or the pregnancy blood test if no embryos are successfully formed.

In this case, our compassionate team are here to support you, offering a follow-up appointment with a doctor free of charge, where you will be able to discuss your next steps. We also offer our counselling services throughout treatment, and you can arrange a session at any point of your journey.

Types of medication

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.

FAQs

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**.

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 side effects from the medication you are taking. It may be the case, however, 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**.



FAQs about side effects

Should I take painkillers if I have a headache?

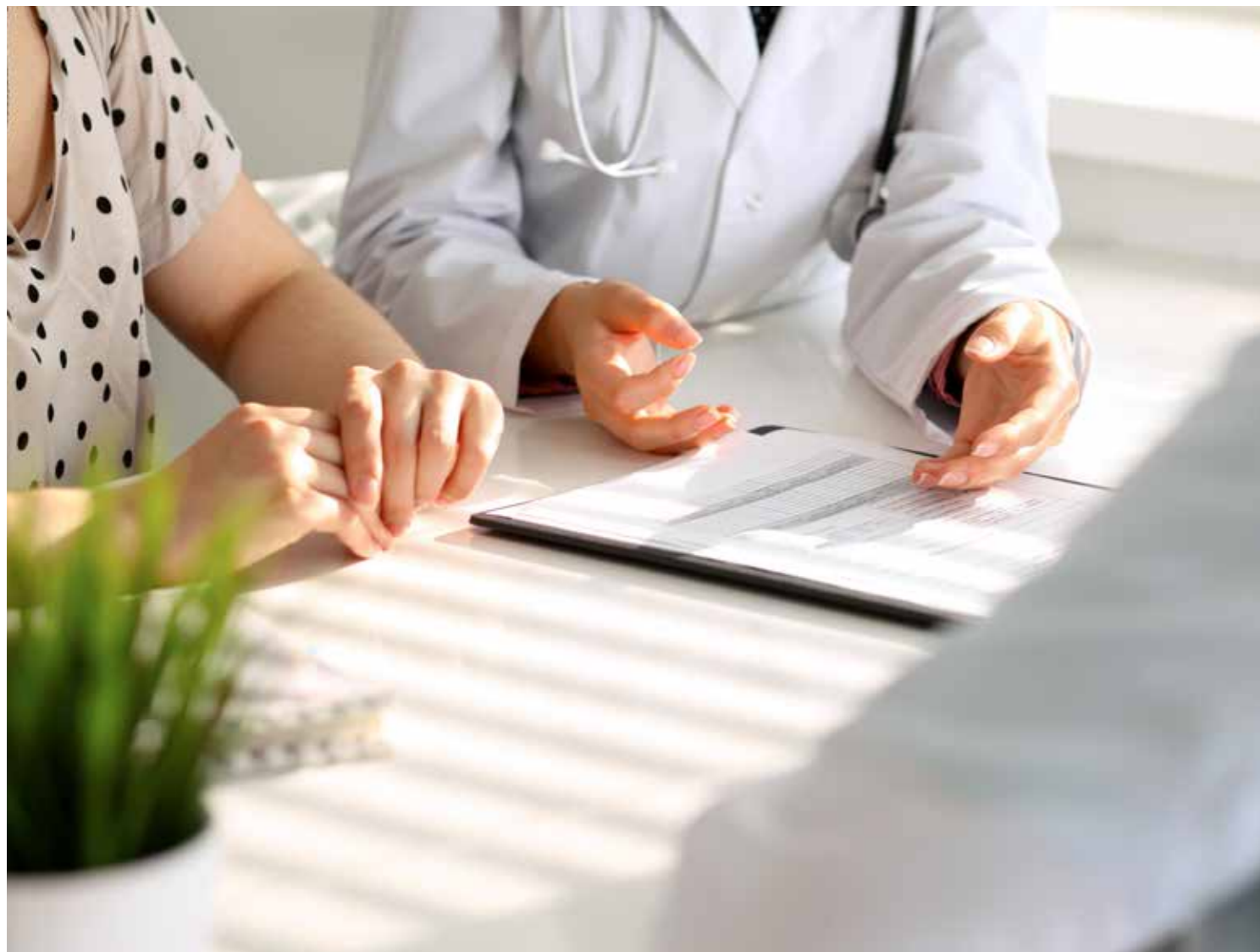
If you have a headache, it's important that you should use paracetamol as pain relief, not ibuprofen. Ibuprofen can affect your cycle, so it is essential that you do not take this at any point during your treatment. Most of our patients take paracetamol unless they have been advised otherwise by a nurse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

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. If you are experiencing side effects outside of the opening hours for patient support, then please call our emergency number (refer to page 6 for contact details).

Can I drink alcohol during treatment?

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



Embryo transfer

The embryo transfer is an important procedure where your embryo(s) will be transferred to your womb. You will usually be booked in for the afternoon and the appointment takes around 30-minutes. Our clinicians will ensure that you are feeling comfortable and ready for the procedure when you come for your appointment. This is usually a painless process which does not require sedation.

How to prepare:



We advise you to have a half to full bladder for your embryo transfer. This will enable a smooth transfer of your embryos. When your bladder is full, this pushes down on the uterus allowing easier access into the uterine cavity.



Ask the nurse on arrival at the clinic if there are any delays for the procedure so you do not sit uncomfortably waiting with a full bladder.



Bring your partner (if applicable) along for support.

Straight after my embryo transfer:

The nurse will give you the date to book in your pregnancy blood test which will be taken between approximately 9–11 days after your embryo transfer.

Please be advised: If your pregnancy blood test falls on the weekend then you will be asked to make your blood test appointment for the following Monday.

FAQs

Does the embryo transfer hurt?

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

In most cases you will not need to undergo any sedation for your embryo transfer, but it depends upon your individual circumstances, and if sedation is necessary then this can be performed.

Do I need to take the day off work for my embryo transfer?

We advise that you take the day off work for your embryo transfer to ensure that you are feeling comfortable both before and after your appointment, with plenty of time to rest.

Is it OK to exercise after my embryo transfer?

We advise that you do light exercise after your embryo transfer like going for a walk; however, we do not advise any vigorous exercise.

Pregnancy blood test

We know that waiting to have your pregnancy test can sometimes feel slow and you may be feeling a little nervous as you wait for your result, so it's important to stay calm and to be kind to yourself during this time. Make sure that you do nice things to treat yourself and spend time with your friends and family that can support you best.

FAQs

What happens if I experience any pain or bleeding between my embryo transfer and my pregnancy test?

If you develop pain or bleeding, or anything else that you are concerned about whilst you are waiting to do your pregnancy test after your embryo transfer, please contact our patient support team. If you experience any of these symptoms out of clinic opening hours, please call the emergency number and the clinician who is carrying the phone will advise you (refer to page 6 for contact details).

Can I go swimming or have hot baths between my transfer and my pregnancy test?

Although hot baths and swimming can be relaxing, we advise against these activities as they can carry the risk of infection. This also includes Jacuzzis and saunas.

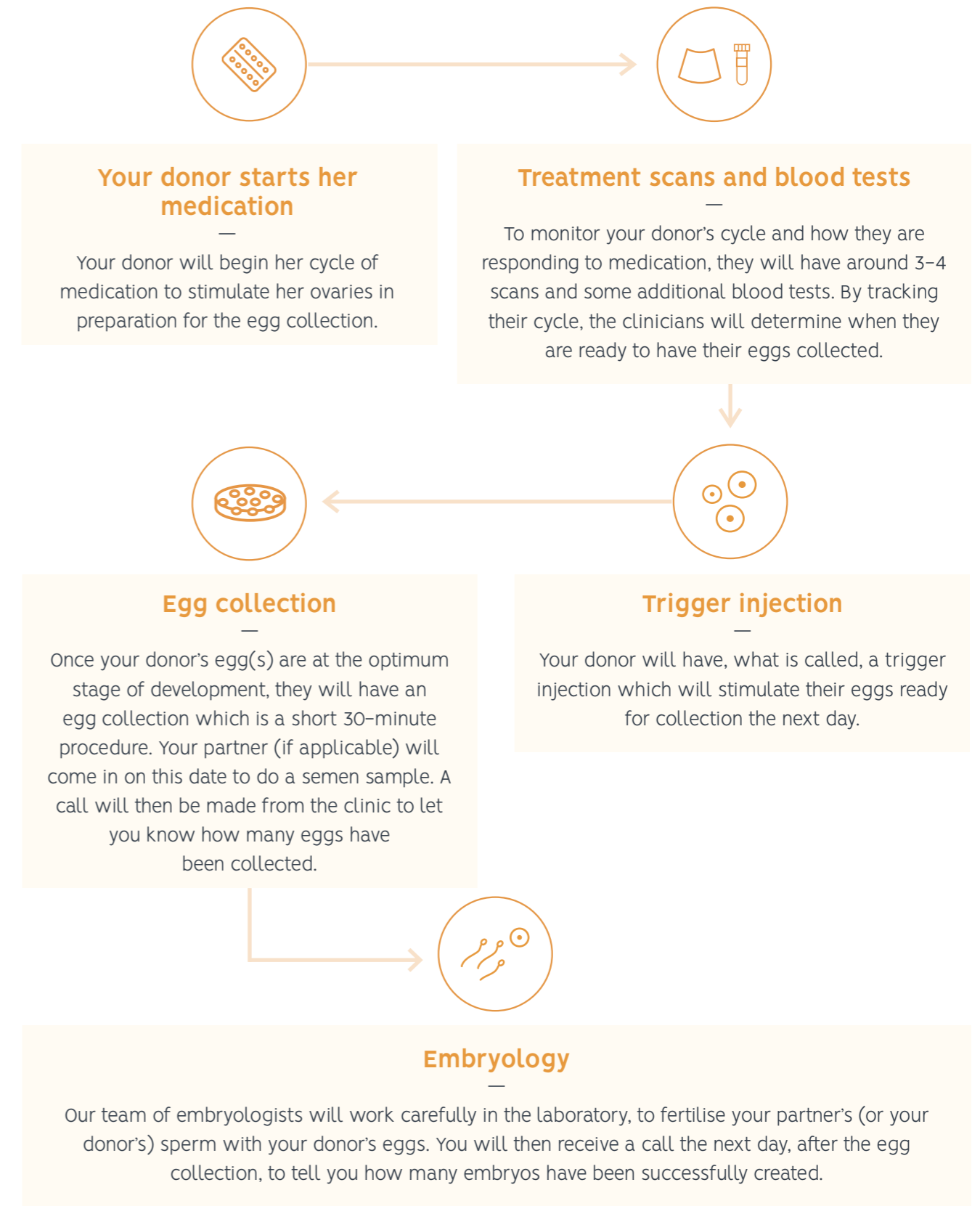
Can I travel by plane between my embryo transfer and the date of my pregnancy test?

We do not advise that you have a long-haul flight (more than 3 hours). If travel is essential, then you must avoid any alcohol during the flight and drink plenty of water to keep hydrated. It is also best to keep active on the plane by walking up and down to reduce the risk of blood clots.



Your donor's treatment cycle

Once your donor has started their treatment cycle, our specialist nurses will keep you updated on the stages of their treatment up to their egg collection. This is so that you know when you and your partner (if applicable) will need to be involved. The nurses will describe their journey to you, but you might find it helpful to refer to this page to understand the process of their treatment.



FAQs about your donor's treatment cycle

How long will the process of my donor's treatment take?

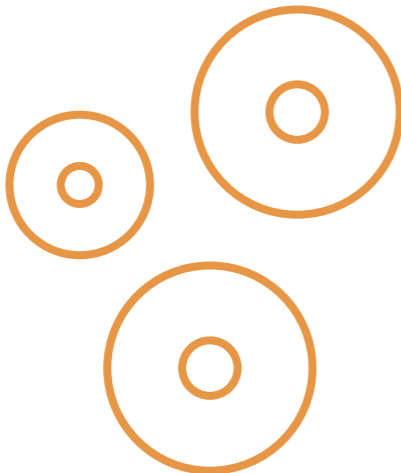
From the start of your donor's medication cycle until her egg collection, the process will take around 2 weeks.

Do I need to do anything to prepare during this process?

You will not need to do anything to prepare in the meantime unless this has been discussed with the clinician. During this time, you just need to make sure that you always have your phone handy so that the clinicians can inform you as quickly as they can about when you need to begin medication or come into the clinic.

Can I do anything in preparation to improve my chances of treatment working for me?

There are some simple things that you can do to prepare yourself for treatment to keep your mind and body feeling healthy before and 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. See our Lifestyle tips on page 22 for details.



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 IVF fertility treatment will 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.

We wish you every luck with your treatment.

Geeta Nargund

Professor Geeta Nargund
Founder and Medical Director – CREATE Fertility





| CREATE[™]
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Pioneers of Natural and Mild IVF

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