

In Vitro Fertilization - IVF Treatment Process

Infertility is medically defined as the inability to become pregnant after one year of unprotected sexual intercourse using no methods of birth control whatsoever.

Unfortunately, infertility affects 1 in 6 couples. In vitro fertilization is a method of assisted reproduction in which a man's sperm and a woman's egg are combined in a laboratory dish to allow for fertilization outside of the body. IVF is the most effective and most common fertility treatment today

Many couples and even single women are seeking IVF treatment because sexual intercourse has not resulted in pregnancy. With the IVF treatment process, the eggs are taken from the woman's ovary, placed with sperm in a dish, or a single sperm is injected into the egg to achieve fertilization. The resulting embryos from the in vitro process are placed inside the woman's uterine cavity by passing a catheter through the cervix. Embryo freezing is also done if there are extra embryos after the transfer.

IVF treatment process is usually the procedure of choice when a woman has blocked or damaged fallopian tubes or no fallopian tubes at all. The IVF treatment process has proven successful for women who are infertile due to endometriosis and for men who have a low sperm count.

IVF is the treatment of choice for couples who experience "unexplained" infertility or if the woman suffers from tubal blockage or poor ovarian reserve. For men with abnormal semen parameters, fertilization can be improved by intracytoplasmic sperm injection (ICSI) of a single sperm into an egg.

In Vitro Fertilization (IVF) is a well-established, safe, and effective treatment option for infertility with over 140,000 IVF cycles reported each year in the US and 45000 cycles in UK.. The pregnancy and miscarriage rate is age dependant. Newer technology is enabling these rates to be better. You will receive advice and have the opportunity to talk the options with Dr Shawaf.

While there are many other ART options available, IVF success rates are much higher than other options like Intrauterine Insemination (IUI) and may shorten the time to a successful outcome in many cases and has been considered to be more cost effective (NICE Guidelines 2013).

There are several factors that you may be recommended treatment with IVF including:

- Age
- Blocked fallopian tubes
- Male factor
- Unexplained infertility
- Genetic/Chromosomal factors
- Anovulation
- Endometriosis

Here is a brief overview of how IVF works:

The steps involved in an IVF treatment cycle include controlled ovarian hyperstimulation, egg retrieval, fertilization and embryo culture, and embryo transfer. Embryo freezing is also done if there are extra embryos remaining after the embryo transfer is done.

- **Controlled Ovarian Hyperstimulation**
- **Egg Retrieval**
- **Egg Fertilization & Embryo Culture**
- **ICSI**
- Embryo Freezing