

**Patient
Information**

In Vitro Fertilisation (IVF)

Introduction

This leaflet gives you information about the process of IVF as advised by your specialist.

In Vitro Fertilisation (IVF) is an assisted method of conception which increases the chance of pregnancy by placing fertilised ova or eggs directly into the uterus or womb. The fertilised eggs are called embryos.

How does the IVF work?

Each fresh IVF cycle has 5 main steps:

Step 1 – Suppressing your natural menstrual cycle

You will take a drug in the form of an injection to temporarily switch off the natural hormone production, thereby preventing ovulation.

Step 2 - Ovarian stimulation

Daily injections stimulate the ovaries to produce several eggs. These are monitored by ultrasound scans. When they reach the right size, another drug is given to ripen the eggs and prepare them for removal.

Step 3 - Egg retrieval

The fluid within each follicle is gently sucked out and given to the embryologists who search for the eggs using a microscope.

This procedure takes about 20 minutes and almost all women are fully recovered and able to go home after a couple of hours.

To minimise the discomfort of this procedure, the egg recovery is carried out either using sedation or general anaesthetic (while you are asleep).

Before this procedure, the man will have already produced a sample of semen. This is prepared in a special way before being placed with the eggs.

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Department

Gynaecology

Review due

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Sperm and eggs are incubated overnight in a special fluid that provides them with the right nutrients to allow fertilisation to happen.

The next morning, the eggs will be checked for signs of fertilisation. The embryologist, from the Cotswold Fertility Unit will telephone you with the result.

Step 5 - Embryo transfer

Embryos are placed gently inside the womb on the 2nd, 3rd or 5th day after egg retrieval. Embryo transfer is an outpatient procedure which takes only a few minutes to perform. After the embryo transfer, you will be advised to use hormone vaginal pessaries for 2 weeks until you are due to take a pregnancy test.

Success rates

Many factors influence the successful outcome in the IVF cycle including the woman's age, her health and the number of embryos transferred to the womb. Success rates vary with different fertility units.

We advise you to visit the fertility website for more information (details are at the end of this leaflet).

Contact information

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact the fertility nurses through Mrs K Reddy's secretary on the number below:

Cotswold Fertility Unit

Tel: 0300 422 3128

Monday to Friday,
8:00am to 4:00pm

Website: www.cotswoldfertilityunit.co.uk

Patient Information

Gloucestershire Domestic Abuse Support Service (GDASS)

This is a county-wide service offering a variety of support programmes for women and men over 16 years old who are experiencing domestic abuse.

Tel: 01452 726 570

Monday to Friday, 9:00am to 5:00pm

Domestic Violence Helpline

Tel: 0808 2000 247 (24 hours)

Email: support@gdass.org.uk

Website: www.gdass.org.uk

Further information

Human Fertilisation & Embryology Authority

Website: www.hfea.gov.uk

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Making a choice

Shared Decision Making

If you are asked to make a choice, you may have lots of questions that you want to ask. You may also want to talk over your options with your family or friends. It can help to write a list of the questions you want answered and take it to your appointment.



Ask 3 Questions

To begin with, try to make sure you get the answers to three key questions if you are asked to make a choice about your healthcare.

1. What are my options?
2. What are the pros and cons of each option for me?
3. How do I get support to help me make a decision that is right for me?

These resources have been adapted with kind permission from the MAGIC Programme, supported by the Health Foundation

* Ask 3 Questions is based on Shepherd HL, et al. Three questions that patients can ask to improve the quality of information physicians give about treatment options: A cross-over trial. Patient Education and Counselling, 2011;84: 379-85

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<https://aqua.nhs.uk/resources/shared-decision-making-case-studies/>