

Information for new couples

Yeovil Hospital Fertility Centre,
Women's Health and Maternity Unit

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yeovilhospital.nhs.uk

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The clinic aims to provide comprehensive investigations for both partners and a wide range of treatments on a free NHS basis.

It is staffed by:

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|----------------|------------------------|
| Nadia Soliman | (Consultant) |
| Hany Omran | (Associate Specialist) |
| Helen Butt | (Lead Fertility Nurse) |
| Steve Savage | (Lead Sonographer) |
| Julie Anscombe | (Secretary) |

The fertility clinic is situated in the outpatient suite on the ground floor of the Women's Health and Maternity Unit. Please report to the receptionist on arrival.

Appointments

Your initial appointment will be sent to you in response to your doctor's referral letter, but after that you might need to make your own appointments. You can do this by phoning the Gynae Outpatient Team on 01935 384411 on a Monday, Tuesday or Wednesday between 9am and 4.30pm.

We encourage both partners to come to the first appointment, but after that you may choose to come together or individually as appropriate.

Clinic times

| | |
|-----------|---------------------------------|
| Monday | 2pm to 4.30pm |
| Tuesday | 2pm to 4.30pm (alternate weeks) |
| Wednesday | 2pm to 4.30pm |

Contact details

Sister Helen Butt (mobile number): 07825 255621

Julie Anscombe: 01935 384286

Tests and treatment options

Our range of tests includes the following:

- Rubella status
- Chlamydia screening
- Hormone screening for women
- Progesterone checks for ovulation
- Examination and pelvic scan for women
- Semen analysis
- Laparoscopy and hysteroscopy
- Hycosy (tubal patency test)

The order and range of tests will vary with the couple, and sometimes some tests will be delayed while a problem is treated (for instance failure of ovulation). Your own doctor may have already performed some of these tests. Many tests are timed in relation to your cycle and day one is always taken as the first day of your period. Extra tests may be necessary in some instances.

We offer a wide range of treatment options at this clinic. These include ovulation induction with careful monitoring, tubal surgery and IUI. At present, IVF is not provided.

Advice on getting pregnant

Your general health should be as good as it can be before you try to conceive. Any medical conditions should be treated or under the best possible control (for instance diabetes or epilepsy). If you have any family history of congenital abnormality, it is worth seeking advice about the possible relevance of this gene.

Folic acid

In agreement with the Department of Health recommendations, we advise every woman who is trying to conceive to take folic acid 400 micrograms daily and continuing this until three months of pregnancy. This regime has been found to reduce the risk of conceiving a baby with Spina Bifida.

Smoking, alcohol and drugs

You should stop smoking before trying to conceive. It seriously affects your chances of getting pregnant. Heavy alcohol consumption will reduce fertility and greatly increase the risk of abnormality if you do conceive. Moderate alcohol intake (up to 6 units per week) does not seem to carry a significant risk. Recreational drugs have potential for considerable harm if taken whilst you are trying to conceive or during pregnancy and should be avoided.

Dietician

For individuals who have a high BMI (overweight) recommendations will be made to lose weight in order to increase the chances of pregnancy. You will be offered a referral to a hospital-based dietician for support and advice with your diet if you feel that this will help.

Timing and frequency of intercourse

Timing of intercourse is not critical. Normal sperm in the normal cervical mucus will survive for several days and the egg lasts for something close to a day. There is little difference in pregnancy rates where intercourse happens every one, two or three days. There is also no clear advantage to 'saving up' sperm by abstaining for a number of days before timing sex to coincide with ovulation and this approach may actually reduce your prospects. Most women with irregular cycles will ovulate about 14 days before their next period and will be fertile from about day 11 to day 15 of a 28 day cycle (counting the first day of a period as day one).

Having intercourse at least once during this phase should give near optimum chances of conception. For couples whose natural inclinations lead them to have intercourse more than once a week, there is little point in regimenting it. Some women notice the production of extra watery mucous discharge from the vagina around the time of ovulation and they are likely to be fertile throughout the phase of producing such mucus.

Expectations

Of the whole population in this country trying for a pregnancy, less than 15 per cent will conceive in any one cycle, with the proportion dropping with age. Ten per cent of all pregnancies take longer than a year to achieve. There is a large element of chance or luck in conceiving in any one month. Most normal couples will take several months. Treatments to remedy ovulation will, at best, only give a rise in pregnancy rates equal to the chance of a normal fertile couple (ie. 15 per cent or less per cycle). The more sophisticated forms of treatment involving powerful fertility drugs (ie. IVF and IU) may produce better pregnancy rates but rarely more than 25-30 per cent per cycle.

Counselling service

If you are seeking fertility treatment, and would like some counselling, this service is now available on the NHS at no cost to you.

For further details or to make an appointment, please contact Rita Lewis on 07812 991693 or email rita@yourtimecounselling.co.uk

Useful addresses and telephone numbers

Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority

HFEA

21 Bloomsbury Street

London, WC1B 3HF

Tel: 0207 291 8200 Fax: 0207 291 8201

CHILD (A self-help support group)

Charter House

43 St Leonard's Road

Beckshill on Sea

East Sussex, TN40 11JE

Tel: 01424 732361

ISSUE

National Fertility

Association

509 Aldridge Road

Great Barr

Birmingham

Books

Understanding Infertility by Mr P Wardle and Dr D Cahill. Published by Family Doctor Publications in association with the British Medical Association. It is a small book which explains common investigations and treatments. It is one of a series of books on various medical conditions and this is available through retail chemists. Cost £3.50. ISBN 1898205825

Fertility Problems - A Simple Guide by Prof Ruth Chambers. Gives information about infertility investigations and treatment. Also aimed at GPs and nurses. Available through bookshops costing £17.95 ISBN 185775302X

Patient Advice and Liaison Service

If you have any concerns you feel unable to raise with the fertility team, please contact the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) on 01935 384706. They are there to help patients, families and carers when they need advice. Their aim is to sort out any problems or concerns that occur when using health services.

More formal complaints are managed by the complaints team. They can be contacted on 01935 384657.

Websites for further information

The Human Fertility and Embryology Authority

This organisation licences UK Centres offering IVF, donor sperm and donor egg treatments.

www.hfea.gov.uk

University of Bristol Centre of Reproductive Medicine

An award winning website giving information about general fertility and assisted conception.

www.repromed.org.uk

Net Doctors

Gives general health information for patients including a specific section on fertility issues.

www.netdoctors.co.uk/womenshealth/fertility/index.shtml

Fertility Friends

Website offering support to couples undergoing Fertility treatment

www.fertilityfriends.co.uk

Yeovil District Hospital

NHS Foundation Trust

Higher Kingston

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Ref: 14-15-111

Review: 09/17