



Human
Fertilisation &
Embryology
Authority

Questions to ask your clinic

www.hfea.gov.uk

About this leaflet

We are the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority (HFEA), the UK's independent regulator of fertility treatment.

As we're responsible for licensing and inspecting UK fertility clinics and setting the standards they must meet, we know a lot about what makes a good clinic and what patients should look for.

We know that consultations can be overwhelming as you're often given lots of information in a short space of time. And we also know that when you've got a lot on your mind, it can be difficult to gather your thoughts.

That's why we've written this leaflet listing some of the questions you might like to ask during your consultations. You can take this to your appointments to use as a reference point. This will help you to:

- make the most out of the time you have with your doctor or nurse, and
- make sure you have the information you need to be fully informed and comfortable with the recommended treatment.

Questions you might like to ask

Treatment

- What are the benefits of the treatment you've recommended and why do you think it's the best option for me?
- How many patients at your clinic have had this treatment in the last two years and how many of them have become pregnant/had a baby?
- Are there different treatment options? If so, what do they involve and why do you think they are less suitable for me?
- What other options are available if this treatment doesn't work?
- How does my age affect the choice of fertility treatment?

Treatment add ons

Sometimes clinics offer optional extras on top of your normal fertility treatment, often at an additional cost. These are known as treatment add ons. They are typically emerging techniques that may have shown some promising results in initial studies but haven't necessarily been proven to improve pregnancy or birth rates.

We've developed a traffic light rating system to help you identify which treatment add ons have a lot of evidence supporting their effectiveness and safety and which have very little evidence, or should be considered experimental; visit www.hfea.gov.uk/treatmentaddons.

If you are offered an add on, read the information on our website and ask your clinic for more information on why they are offering the treatment and the evidence that it will work for you.

Medication, tests and wellbeing

- What medication will I have to take and what side effects may they cause?
- How will I take the medication?
- Are there any alternatives to the medications you have mentioned?
- Which tests will I need to have and why? How much will they cost?
- How can I change my lifestyle to boost my chance of success? How will this help?
- What physical and emotional symptoms can I expect from treatment?

Using a donor

If you've decided to use donor eggs, sperm or embryos in your treatment, you might like to ask some additional questions including:

- Why has IVF been recommended and not intrauterine insemination (IUI), or vice versa?
- Will both my partner and I be the legal parents of the child?
- What information can I find out about my donor?
- What information can my child find out about the donor?

You can find more information about donor conception at www.hfea.gov.uk/donorconception.

Support

- What kind of counselling or advice service do you provide? What can it help me with?
- Is there a charge for counselling, or how many free sessions can I have?
- If I don't take up counselling now, will you reoffer it at a later date?
- Does this clinic have a patient support group I can join or are there other support groups that you would recommend?

- Could you tell me more about how you will assess me before you give the go-ahead for treatment?
- Can I have the contact details for someone to answer medical or other questions? When is the best time to phone you?

Costs

- Can you break down all the costs of this treatment?
- Might other costs arise? (Your clinic should give you a costed treatment plan).
- How can these costs be reduced?

Administration

- How many times will I need to visit the clinic?
- What consents do I need to provide and why?
- How will my personal information be used?
- Have you recorded my partner's name and contact details as well?

Next steps

- What happens next?
- Do I (or my partner) need to do anything now?
- What support is provided if treatment stops or fails?

Find out more

For more clear, impartial and reliable information on fertility clinics and treatments, visit www.hfea.gov.uk.