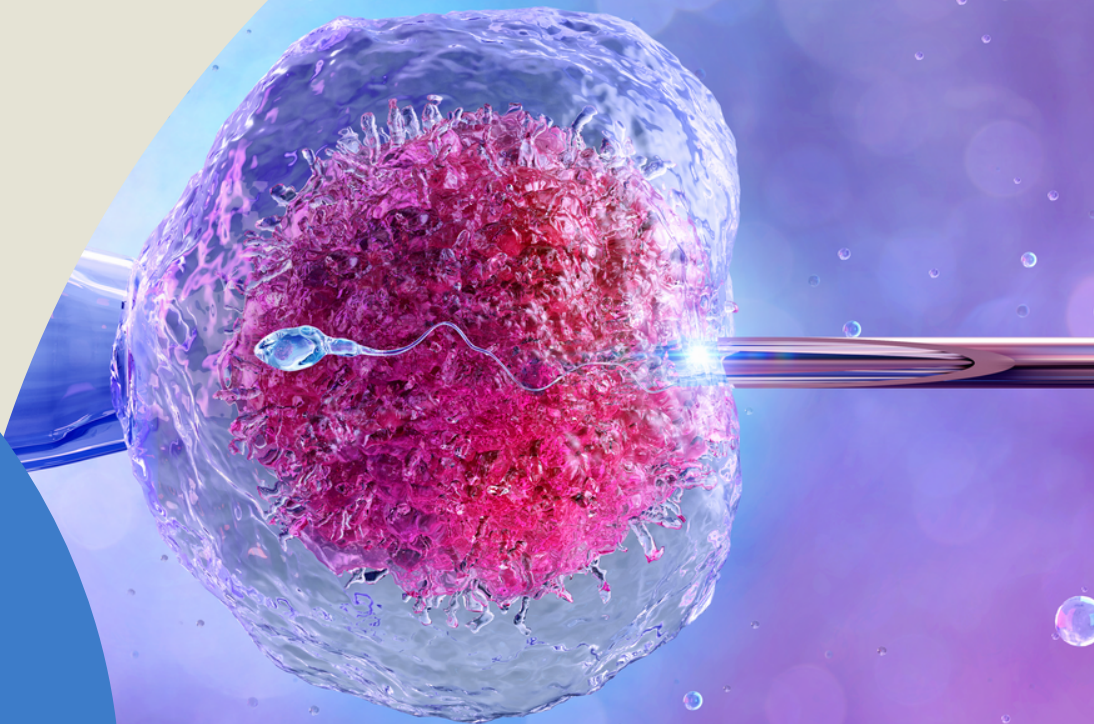


# health+pedia

January 2024



**UNDERSTANDING IVF**

# What is infertility?

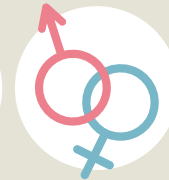
Infertility is the condition where people are unable to induce or achieve pregnancy even after 12 months of regular, unprotected sexual intercourse.



## RISK FACTORS



SMOKING



SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED INFECTION



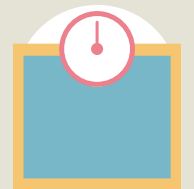
EXPOSURE TO TOXIN



ALCOHOL



AGE



OBESITY

## SYMPTOMS

### MALE



CHANGES IN SEXUAL DESIRE



TESTICLE PAIN



ISSUES WITH EJACULATION

### FEMALE



IRREGULAR PERIOD



NO PERIOD



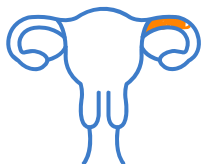
PAIN DURING SEX

# What is an *In vitro* fertilization (IVF) ?

IVF is the process where eggs are removed from a woman's ovary and fertilized with sperm in the laboratory. After 40-48 h, the fertilized egg (embryo) is placed in the woman's womb to grow into a baby.

## Who can benefit from IVF?

Couples facing fertility challenges or unsuccessful fertility treatments can opt for IVF. IVF can help overcome fertility problems in people with



Blocked or damaged fallopian tubes



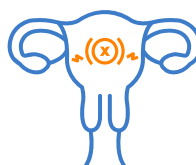
Low sperm quality or count



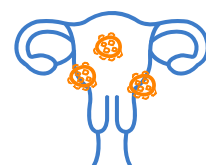
Genetic disorder



Pelvic inflammatory disease



Ovulation disorders



Uterine fibroids or cysts

# What are the medical examinations/tests needed for IVF?

Before going for IVF some medical exams and fertility tests are done

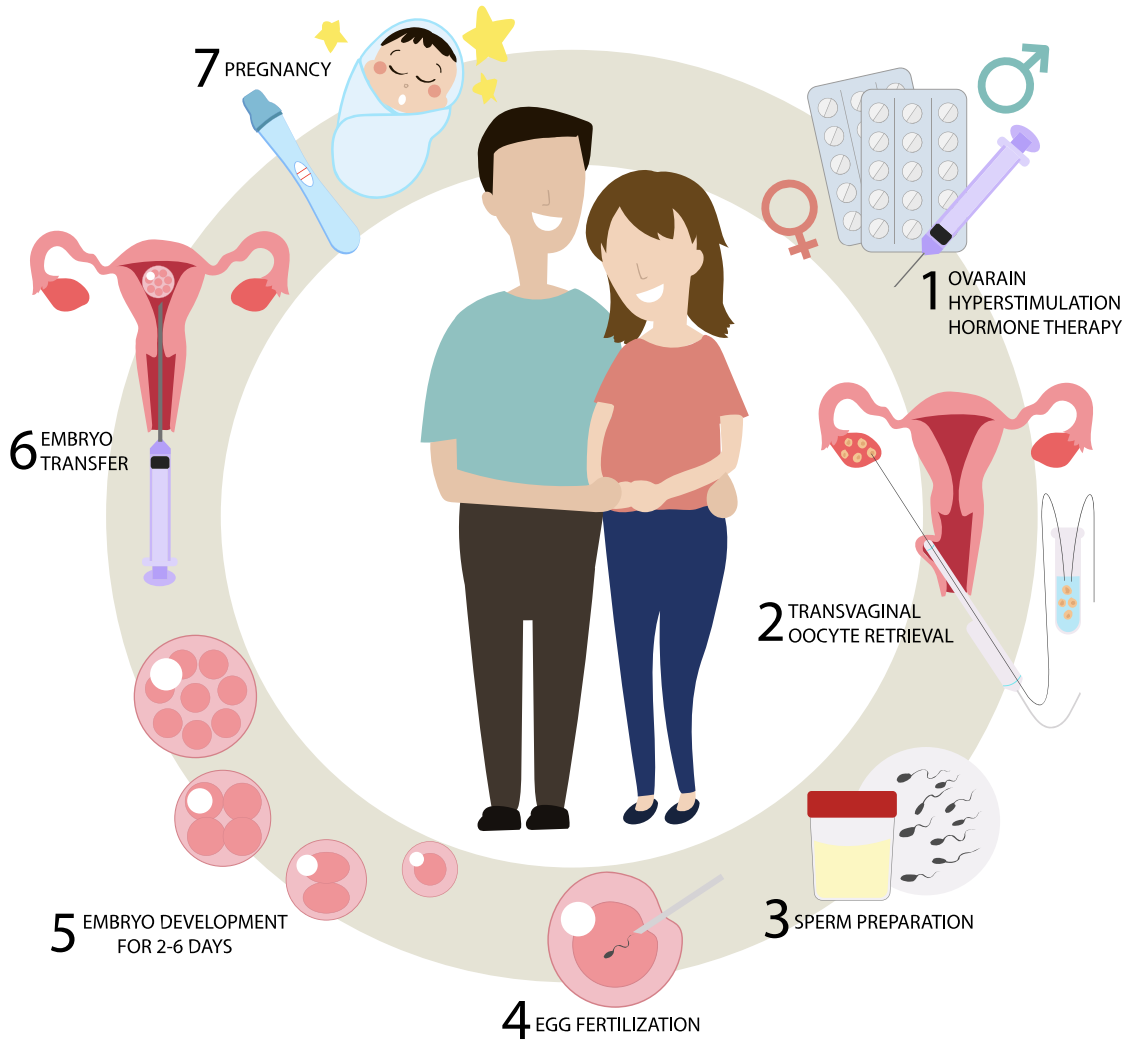
- ▶ Consultation with doctors to understand the process
- ▶ Uterus examination and semen analysis
- ▶ Screening for infections
- ▶ Genetic analysis
- ▶ Blood and urine analysis
- ▶ Ovarian reserve testing

PS: Folic acid supplementation may be suggested for 3 months prior to IVF.





# Stages during IVF



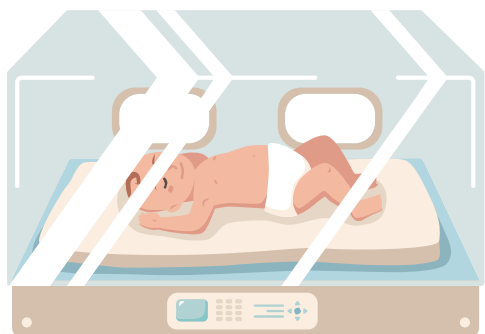
Medications are suggested by the doctor to **hyperstimulate ovulation** and ovaries to produce extra eggs.

**2** **Egg maturation is monitored** by ultrasound scans to check the development of eggs.

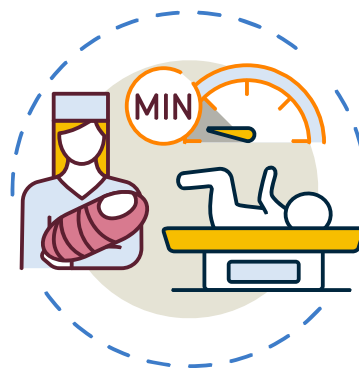
- 3 To retrieve the eggs**, a hollow needle is inserted through the vagina and eggs are removed from the ovary.
- 4 Insemination** is the process where eggs and sperms are combined in a laboratory dish for a few days to create embryos.
- Fertilized **embryos** are **transferred** in the woman's womb with the help of an embryo transferring tube or a catheter.
- 6 Embryo implantation** may take 6-10 days post successful fertilization and a positive pregnancy test can be obtained.

## What are the possible complications?

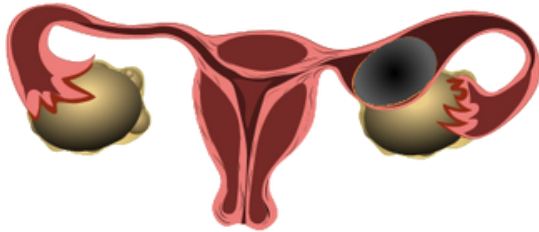
### 1 Premature baby



### 2 Low birth weight baby



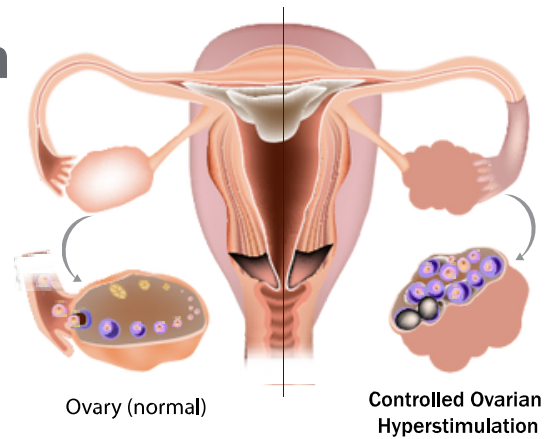
### 3 Ectopic pregnancy



### 4 Side effects from the medications



### 5 Ovarian hyperstimulation syndrome (OHSS) - overactivation of ovaries due to medications during IVF



## Why not delay the IVF ?

- ▶ Fertility declines with age progression
- ▶ Depleting quality/ quantity of eggs with age
- ▶ Decrease in semen quality and quantity
- ▶ Underlying health issues (diminished ovarian reserve etc.) may escalate
- ▶ Timely treatment increases the success probability

# Do's & Don'ts post-procedure

## DO'S

Avoid smoking and alcohol consumption

Try to maintain a healthy weight with  $BMI \leq 30$

Practice mindfulness

Drink ample amount of water

Try to rest and relax in the initial days

Consult your doctor in case of any discomfort

## DON'TS

Excess alcohol or tobacco intake

Do heavy exercises

Over stress yourself

Avoid hot bath or sauna

Miss the prescribed medicines by your doctor

Don't plan any strenuous activity without asking your doctor



# Frequently Asked Questions:

1

## **Is it painful to go through IVF?**

The steps involved in IVF may cause mild discomfort, however, with the help of anesthesia, it is possible to minimize the pain.

2

## **Does IVF guarantee pregnancy?**

NO. Some factors like health conditions, age, and cause of infertility, genetic predisposition contribute to the probability of success.

3

## **Are there any side effects that may be associated?**

Headache, hot flashes, stomach pain cramping, and bloating are some common side effects that may be associated with IVF medications.

4

## **How many times can a couple go for IVF?**

There is no limit for it. However, several attempts may lower the chances of success.

# 5 Is it normal to have some bleeding in early stages of IVF?

Bleeding is not normal in any of the pregnancy cases. You should always connect with your doctor if you feel so.

## References:

**1**NHS. IVF. Overview. National Health Service .

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**2**APA. IVF- In vitro fertilization.American Pregnancy Association

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**3**WHO. Infertility - What causes Infertility (2023) World health organisation.

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**4**Rossi BV, Bressler LH, Correia KF, Lipskind S, Hornstein MD, Missmer SA. Lifestyle and in vitro fertilization: what do patients believe? Fertil Res Pract. 2016 Oct 12;2:11. doi: 10.1186/s40738-016-0026-5. PMID: 28620538; PMCID: PMC5424337

**5**Choe J, Shanks AL. In Vitro Fertilization. [Updated 2023 Sep 4]. In: StatPearls [Internet]. Treasure Island (FL): StatPearls Publishing; 2023 Jan-

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