

Information for Patients

Information for patients who have been referred for infertility investigations prior to infertility or assisted conception treatment

IMPORTANT: Please read this leaflet before you attend your appointment

You or your partner have been referred to Saint Mary's Hospital for investigation and treatment of infertility. As part of NHS funding arrangements, infertility investigations are only carried out on couples unless there are exceptional cases.

You will have been asked to provide details about yourself and your partner. Please note that all correspondence will be sent to the intended female recipient of any treatment and we apologise in advance for this.

Whilst some specific investigations may only require the person undergoing the test to attend, we ask that you attend as a couple for all clinic appointments/consultations so that any previous test results can be conveyed to you both in the context of your joint fertility.

Why do I need the scans and blood tests?

In order that we can ensure your treatment is not delayed, we would like you both to attend for some baseline investigations. These allow the consultant specialists to assess your suitability for treatment and help them to decide on the most appropriate next step for you. This may mean an onward referral for IVF/assisted conception treatment or to a gynaecology (female) or andrology (male) clinic for other forms of treatment.

You may already have had some of these tests done previously, however, some levels can change over time and may alter the type of treatment that would be best for you. Once all the results of the tests below are available, (this will usually take 2-3 weeks) they will be reviewed by a Consultant Specialist in Reproductive Medicine.

It is not possible for the nursing team to give you these results over the phone as they need to be considered together with your clinical history and in the context of your eligibility to NHS funding. You will therefore be sent a clinic appointment so that this discussion can take place face to face with a doctor or a specialist nurse.

What tests will I have?

- **Hormone profile (female)**

It is necessary for us to undertake blood tests on the female for:

- Oestradiol
- Follicle Stimulating Hormone (FSH)
- Luteinising Hormone (LH)
- Anti-mullerian hormone (AMH).

These are all female hormones which need to be measured between day 2 and day 5 of your menstrual cycle (please read the instructions on your letter carefully). The results of these tests may help us determine the cause of your infertility and, most importantly, guide us on which treatments will be most suitable for you.

If you do not have regular, or any, menstrual cycles, instructions for what to do next will be included in your letter. Please read this carefully.

- **Virology Screening (both partners)**

In order that we do not delay future treatment that may be offered, we need to take blood samples from you and your partner for virology screening; you will also be asked to provide a urine sample to test for a Chlamydia. It is important that before you attend your appointment, you read the accompanying leaflet in your pack 'Screening for infectious diseases prior to assisted conception treatment', as you will both be asked to give your consent to have these taken.

- **Transvaginal Scan (female)**

On the day that you attend for blood tests, you will have a transvaginal ultrasound scan performed. A scan probe is inserted in the vagina to look at your ovaries and womb. The scan will give information about the number of growing follicles (containing eggs) in your ovaries and will help to detect any problems within the womb which may impact on your treatment.

It is likely that the scan will be performed whilst you are still having your period, please do not be embarrassed by this. The scan should not take longer than ten minutes and is not painful. You will need to empty your bladder and remove any tampons prior to having your scan.

A nurse will discuss the preliminary results of the scan with you on the day, but the full results of your scan will be discussed in more detail at your clinic visit.

- **Semen Analysis (male)**

Male partners will be required to provide a semen (sperm) sample for analysis. On the day that you attend for blood tests, you should go to the Andrology Department

reception to make an appointment. This is on the first floor in the Department of Reproductive Medicine, in the old Saint Mary's Hospital.

Unfortunately this test cannot be offered on the same day as you attend for your scan.

- **Body Mass Index (female)**

Finally, we will measure your body mass index (height and weight) and check your blood pressure.

Women with a body mass index above 30 are not eligible for NHS funded assisted conception. If your BMI is already above this level then please seek advice from your GP regarding weight loss.

When do I come for these tests?

You should telephone the nurses in on 0161 276 6209 on the first day of your period (This is the day you wake up bleeding). The department is open for telephone calls 7 days a week.

Please ring between 2.00 and 4.00 pm. You will need to be available to attend within the next 4 days, excluding weekends.

You will be given an appointment time for your scan and your blood tests. We suggest that your partner attends for blood tests on the same day as you, in order to prevent delay to your treatment. Your blood tests will be taken in the old Saint Mary's Hospital. On arrival please take a numbered card off the table and you will be called in for your blood tests. You may have your scan in either the old Saint Mary's Hospital or the new Saint Mary's Hospital. The nurse will advise you of this when you contact the department.

Please do not forget to make an appointment for a sperm test (see above) on the day that you attend for your blood tests and scan.

Where do I go for the tests?

You will have been sent a map with your letter. The Department of Reproductive Medicine is located in the Old Saint Mary's building. Our entrance is on Oxford Road opposite Whitworth Park.

You do not need to let our reception know you have arrived, you can go straight up the stairs to the blood room and ultrasound scan room on the first floor
If you have any questions please contact the nurses on:

0161 276 6209

Between 10.00 am-12.00 noon or 2.00 pm-4.00 pm, 7 days a week.