



Saint Mary's Managed Clinical Service
Division of Reproductive Medicine

PATIENT INFORMATION LEAFLET

SEDATION FOR PATIENTS UNDERGOING EGG RECOVERY OR EMBRYO TRANSFER

During the process of egg recovery, the surgeon will place a scanning probe into the vagina in a very similar way to your previous scans. A fine needle is then inserted alongside the probe. When the needle is used to retrieve the ripened eggs, a momentary discomfort often occurs - once for each ovary.

To help with this it is routine practice to use intravenous sedation and a short acting and very powerful pain-relieving medication together, rather than general anaesthetic. You will therefore be sedated and not fully unconscious. This is very safe.

Most people who have sedation feel no discomfort and have no recollection of the procedure afterwards.

CAN I CHOOSE TO HAVE A GENERAL ANAESTHETIC?

You may have had a general anaesthetic in the past and feel you will not cope with sedation. There are some surgical reasons for using general anaesthetic, however these are rare, and your surgeon will advise you if this is necessary.

Most patients in the UK and throughout the world have sedation to enable egg recovery and are very satisfied with it. Sedation is also recommended and preferred as the method for this procedure by the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence UK (NICE) and is our technique of choice at Saint Mary's Hospital.

In a recent survey, over 95% of patients were very happy with their experience and would have sedation again if it was needed. They also benefited from low rates of nausea and vomiting, a quicker recovery and a shorter stay in hospital - often leaving by lunchtime. Most of our sedated patients do not remember any detail of the procedure itself and experience no discomfort.

Very occasionally the anaesthetist may decide to perform egg collection under a general anaesthetic for safety reasons. This does carry some risks in terms of increased sickness, sore throat, dental damage, and unexpected allergy, which will be discussed with you by your anaesthetist.

WHAT HAPPENS DURING THE PROCEDURE?

During the procedure you will be monitored fully, which is routine. Typically, you will enter a deep to moderate sedation about a minute after the sedation begins and may recall some aspects of conversation during this initial period. Very often this is the last moment you will remember before waking up at the end.

It is important that you understand that with sedation there is a possibility that you may remember some events during surgery and that you may feel the probe and possibly a little discomfort. This happens only rarely, and the anaesthetist will usually deepen sedation at this point, often with you having no recollection. Only with a general anaesthetic would you typically be completely unaware.

The whole process takes about 30 minutes. After a short period of recovery and a something to eat and drink, the ward nurses will ensure that you are safe to leave us. Whether you have sedation or a general anaesthetic, please remember that you should not operate any machine, drive, or sign important documents until the day afterwards, as your judgement may be impaired.

Please ask the fertility nurses if you have any questions about what will happen to you.

If you require any further information or clarification of terminology, please do not hesitate to talk to one of the doctors or nurses, who will be happy to discuss your concerns with you.

CONTACT DETAILS



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