



# The Hull IVF Unit.

We understand fertility

## Before treatment begins...

There are a number of things that have to be done before your treatment can begin.

### Selection Criteria

Although IVF and other fertility treatments can bring huge benefits to some people, for others they are not appropriate. For these people, allowing treatment to start would only bring false hope and heartache. We would not want anyone to have to go through this.

At the Hull IVF Unit we will not allow treatment to be started if we do not believe that the chances of success are reasonable. It is for this reason that we have introduced selection criteria:

- We will not offer treatment to ladies over the age of 50. After the age of 40, the chances of success become slim. It is for this reason that we will treat ladies over the age of 40 subject to them undergoing counselling and tests to ensure that their ovaries are still functioning.
- We will not offer treatment to patients with a BMI of 35 or over. The BMI (body mass index) is a measure of body "fatness." It is calculated by dividing your weight in kilograms (kg,) by your height in metres squared (m<sup>2</sup>). You are much less likely to achieve a pregnancy after treatment if your BMI is over 35. You are also more likely to experience problems during pregnancy, such as miscarriage.

If you have any questions about our selection criteria, please feel free to [contact us](#).

### Screening Tests

We will also need to carry out some basic tests to make sure that you and your partner are suitable for treatment and to allow us to recommend the most appropriate treatment for you.

Both partners will need to have a blood test to check for infections such as HIV, Hepatitis B and C and Chlamydia.

Gentlemen will need to provide a semen (sperm) sample for analysis. The tests that we do on the sample at the Unit are more detailed than other semen analyses carried out at the hospital.

Ladies will need to have several more tests. These may include:

- A blood test to confirm immunity to rubella (an infection that can be extremely harmful to unborn babies and cause miscarriages).
- A blood test to measure her hormone levels.
- A cervical smear test (to look for abnormal cells on the cervix).
- Tests to check that her fallopian tubes are not blocked.

For more information about these tests, please refer to our [patient information booklet](#). Staff at the Unit are always happy to answer any questions you may have regarding these screening tests.

## **Keeping yourself healthy**

Keeping yourself healthy will maximise your chance of the treatment being successful. Before treatment starts, both partners should:

- Stop smoking
- Stop drinking alcohol
- Eat a healthy, balanced diet.

We also strongly recommend that the female partner takes a daily folic acid supplement. The dose of the supplement should be 400mcg. These supplements are available from your local chemist. Taking folic acid helps to reduce the risk of your baby being affected by some birth defects, such as spina bifida.

## **The Welfare of the Child Assessment**

By law, we must ensure, to the best of our abilities, that any children born as a result of treatment at our Unit will not be likely to face medical, physical or

psychological harm. We must also ensure that the welfare of any existing children you may have will not be affected by your treatment.

The Welfare of the Child Assessment is simple and straightforward. Nearly all of our patients go through this assessment process without any concern.

The assessment is carried out in two parts:

Firstly, both partners will be required to complete a form. This form will ask about topics such as previous convictions related to harming children, contact with social services over the care of existing children, violence, alcohol and drug abuse, serious medical or mental health conditions and serious inheritable diseases in the family.

If any of these topics are relevant to you, you will not automatically be refused treatment. We will need to gather more information before a decision is made based on your individual case. We may need to speak to other people outside the Unit such as your GP, other doctors or probation officer, but please remember we will not contact anybody without your explicit, written consent.

Secondly, we will give you a form to take to your GP. If appropriate, your GP will sign this letter to confirm that he/she knows of no reason why you should not be treated.

Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any questions relating to the Welfare of the Child Assessment.

## **I am a single woman. Can I be treated?**

Women are not denied treatment simply because they are single. We will, however, need to ensure that you will be able to cope with the additional pressures that single parenthood will bring. Before treatment can begin we will need a social report, a counselling report and approval from the Ethics Committee. For more information about options for single women, please do not hesitate to contact us.

## **Consent**

We will need you to sign official HFEA (Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority) consent forms before any treatment can begin. For more information about the consent forms, please refer to the patient information booklet.