



IVF and Reproductive Endocrinology

# IUI BASICS

## WHAT IS AN IUI?

**Intrauterine insemination (IUI)** is a fertility treatment that involves placing sperm inside a woman's uterus to facilitate fertilization. The goal of IUI is to increase the number of sperm that reach the fallopian tubes and subsequently increase the chance of fertilization.

IUI provides the sperm an advantage by giving it a head start, but still requires a sperm to reach and fertilize the egg on its own.

## HOW DOES IUI WORK?

IUI requires ovulation, at least one open fallopian tube, and a semen sample with healthy sperm. Each IUI treatment is referred to as a "cycle" – the time from the first day of your period to ovulation and insemination and then a pregnancy test two weeks later.

The timeline for IUI treatment usually goes something like this:

- **Egg production.** The ovaries produce eggs for fertilization in a couple of ways. Your doctor may recommend an "unstimulated," or natural, IUI cycle, meaning no fertility drugs are used. Or a doctor may give you a fertility drug at the beginning of your period to stimulate the ovaries to produce several mature eggs. (Women typically release only one egg a month.)
- **Day 12 ultrasound.** When the cycle day 12 ultrasound has been completed and it has been determined that the lead follicle is of appropriate size, the IUI Coordinator will instruct you on when to take your "trigger" shot so your body will ovulate. Once your trigger shot is given, your IUI is scheduled about 36 hours later.

Partners should abstain from ejaculation at a minimum of 24 hours prior to collection for the IUI.

- **Washing the sperm.** Once you ovulate, it's time for your partner to produce a sperm sample, which is then "washed." This process concentrates the hardiest sperm into a small amount of fluid.
- **Insemination.** Using a speculum, a thin, long tube (a catheter) is used to put the concentrated sperm directly into the uterus through the cervix. The procedure is usually painless, but some women feel mild cramping.
- **Pregnancy test.** 14 days after the insemination occurs, a home pregnancy test can be taken. It's important to NOT test early as the "trigger" shot can lead to a false positive.

## MEDICATIONS THAT MAY BE USED

**CLOMID (oral medication) or LETROZOLE (oral medication)**

### **How do they work?**

Clomid and Letrozole are oral medications that increase follicle-stimulating hormone (FSH) levels which promotes the growth of ovarian follicles containing eggs, leading to the release of estrogen. If the fertility drug cycle is successful, an LH surge will occur about a week after the last pill is taken. You will ovulate and release eggs for fertilization.

## THE “TRIGGER” SHOT

Ovidrel/hCG:

Ovidrel® PreFilled Syringe mimics the surge of luteinizing hormone (LH), which triggers the final step in the follicular phase. For ovulation induction, the hormone in Ovidrel® (hCG) is used for final egg maturation as part of the final process of releasing the egg.

## PLANNING FOR PREGNANCY

Many factors that influence your fertility are not within your control, but there are some things that you can do to optimize your chance for success as you prepare for treatment. Please follow these lifestyle recommendations:

- Take a multivitamin supplement containing at least **400 mcg of folic acid** each day
- Eat a well-balanced diet
- Do not smoke, drink alcohol, or use recreational drugs
- Limit your caffeine intake to one 12 ounce beverage each day
- Do not take aspirin or ibuprofen (Motrin or Advil). Take Tylenol as needed.
- Avoid all herbal products and supplements, including soy.

## **SETTING UP YOUR IUI CYCLE**

Once all of your testing is complete, please call the office on cycle day one of your period to set up a baseline ultrasound appointment which will occur anywhere from cycle day 2-5.

\* The IUI Coordinator will also check your insurance benefit sheet to confirm if you require insurance authorization or if you will be self-pay. If you require an authorization, they will first check with the financial team to ensure an authorization is in place. In most cases this will be requested in advance. If you know your insurance requires authorization, it is always helpful to call prior to day one of your menstrual cycle to ensure one is on place. This will help avoid any unnecessary delays.

**Please note: If you are self-pay please check with our financial team for cycle fee.**

## **CYCLE MONITORING**

### **Monitoring Hours for Ultrasounds**

*South Tampa location:*

*Monday-Friday Mornings*

*Saturday and Sunday 8 - 9:30 AM (please note Baseline ultrasound's are not done on the weekend)*

*Holidays vary*

**Satellite offices only offer ultrasound monitoring Mon-Fri 7:30-8:30  
(availability is subject to change based on satellites office availability)**

### **Ultrasounds**

Ultrasounds are done transvaginally by inserting the ultrasound probe into your vagina, which allows us to see your ovaries and measure the follicles as they grow. No special preparation is needed and the ultrasound takes about 10 minutes. If you are allergic to latex, please let us know.

- You will receive a call from the IUI Coordinator with instructions between 1 PM and 4 PM each day that you come in for monitoring.
- We ask that you remove any “blocks” that you may have on your phone so that we can contact you promptly with your instructions. You will be contacted by a “blocked” number so please answer call.
- The IUI Coordinator will tell you when to arrive at the clinic for your procedure.

### **Cycle Cancellation**

There is a chance that your IUI cycle may be cancelled prior to insemination.

Reasons why this could happen are, follicles not developing properly, thick uterine lining, ovarian cysts. In this situation, we may recommend you call on cycle day one of your next menstrual cycle.

## **THE DAY OF YOUR IUI**

Please note that all Inseminations are performed at the South Tampa location

### **Sperm Collection**

Usually the sample is collected through ejaculation into a sterile collection cup. If sample is collected at home, we require the semen to be delivered within an hour of ejaculation, so if one lives close enough the sample can be collected at home.

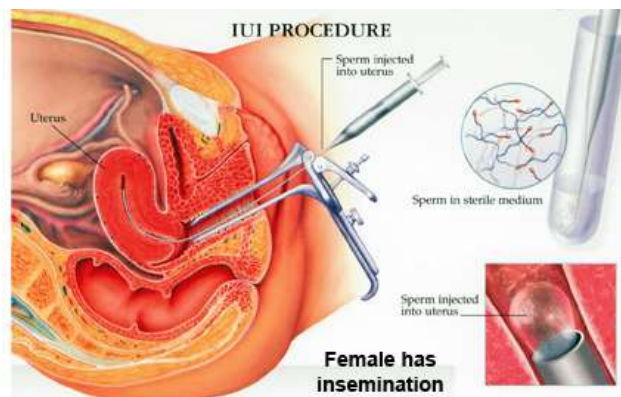
There is a delay between when the semen sample is dropped off for washing and when it is inseminated. We make every effort to perform the IUI as soon after washing is completed as possible.

### **Insemination**

Once the semen sample is ready, you'll be brought into an exam room and asked to undress from the waist down. The staff should give you a drape to place over your lap. The nurse or medical assistant will bring the sperm into the exam room and ask you to verify the name and date of birth on the sample. This ensures that the correct sperm are being used for the insemination.

While lying on an exam table, you'll put your legs into stirrups and a speculum will be inserted into your vagina — similar to what you experience during a Pap smear. During the procedure, the doctor or nurse:

- Attaches a vial containing a sample of healthy sperm to the end of a long, thin, flexible tube (catheter)
- Inserts the catheter into your vagina, through your cervical opening and into your uterus
- Pushes the sperm sample through the tube into your uterus
- Removes the catheter, followed by the speculum



## **AFTER THE IUI:**

You don't have to lay down because the cervix doesn't remain open, but we do allow you to lay down on the table for 10-15 minutes after the procedure.

After your procedure, you can return to work and activity as tolerated. Slight spotting may also occur and is not cause for alarm.

You may resume intercourse anytime after an IUI. We may suggest waiting 48 hours to resume relations if you had any bleeding during the IUI or if a tenaculum is used.

14 days after the IUI, a home pregnancy test can be taken. It is important to NOT test early as the “trigger” shot given can give a false positive and it takes time for it to filter out of your system. Please call our office after taking a home pregnancy test, whether it is positive or negative so you can be set up with your next steps.

## **CAUSES OF CRAMPING AFTER IUI**



Many women experience cramping during or after an IUI. This is very common, and can be caused by the following:

- Cramping during the IUI usually happens as the catheter is being passed through the cervix, and while the sperm is being injected. This cramp is usually pretty short-lived. It should go away as soon as the doctor removes the catheter.
- Some women experience cramping after IUI. The catheter can sometimes irritate the uterus, which can cause mild cramping, too.
- Ovulation can also cause abdominal cramping. If you're ovulating multiple follicles, usually from taking medication to induce ovulation, this may worsen ovulation pain or cramping
- In most cases, cramping after an IUI isn't too painful. Taking Tylenol is usually the preferred pain reliever because it's pregnancy-safe.
- Contact your doctor if your cramping is severe or accompanied by other symptoms like fever or abnormal vaginal discharge.



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**Patient IUI Treatment Cycle Sheet:**

CYCLE DAY/DATE	Instructions/Procedures	TESTING (ultrasound)	LETROZOLE
[approx]		<u>Mon-Fri</u> 7:00 AM – 1:-00 PM <u>Sat/Sun/Holidays</u> 9:00 AM – 10:00 AM	
1.	Please call our office on the first or second day of your menses before 3pm. You will be scheduled to have a baseline ultrasound on cycle day 2-5. (on weekends leave a voicemail before 10am)	None at this time	None at this time You will take Letrozole: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Days 3-7</li> <li>▪ Days 4-8</li> <li>▪ Days 5-9</li> </ul>
2-5.		Baseline Ultrasound	
Cycle days 10-12	Approximate date of ultrasound. The IUI Coordinator will give you exact date.		
	You will be given further instructions regarding timing of your IUI.		
	When the day of your IUI is determined, you <i>may</i> be instructed to take Ovidrel to control timing of ovulation.		
	Your partner <b>must</b> bring in a photo ID the morning of the IUI.		

- Please be aware that your individual cycle may differ slightly from this form and it is important to follow the instructions received from the IUI Coordinator.
- If your menses does start, please notify your office nurse. “Day 1” is first day of FULL flow. If period starts after Noon, we consider the following day as “Day1”.