

TEST OF TIME

Mr Gidon Lieberman, consultant gynaecologist explains that fertility tests provide the answer if you want to start a family



For most couples, achieving a pregnancy is something that is taken for granted. However for some, it's not that easy. In fact, it's estimated that one in seven couples in the UK suffer from some sort of fertility problem and trying to conceive is the second most common reason for young women to see their GP.

The good news is that most couples that seek help will go on to have healthy pregnancies without any treatment, and in cases where treatment is required it is often limited to a minimal amount of intervention.

Of course, trying to conceive is full of anxiety and questions; with every month the pressure of trying to have a baby can put a lot of strain on relationships and everyday life. The press and glossy mags are always full of fertility stories and celebrity mums who have children without any problems.

In order to reassure would-be parents, it is perfectly reasonable to have non-invasive investigations to make sure that the basic ingredients for conceiving are all present. These include urine and blood tests to confirm a woman is ovulating, as well as checking the

ovarian reserve - the ability of the ovary to produce eggs that are capable of fertilisation and producing a healthy pregnancy.

A comprehensive result from a semen analysis test takes just a few days, and an ultrasound examination will demonstrate the health of the uterus and ovaries. In all it shouldn't take more than a month to collect all this information- the results of which, more often than not, can provide a great deal of reassurance for those trying to get pregnant. If fertility treatment is needed, it is often in the form of encouraging ovulation which involves small amounts of medication.

There are many reasons for not conceiving, however in some couples there is simply no reason why it's not happening, this is called unexplained sub-fertility. In these cases, there are several avenues for treatment including intra-uterine insemination (IUI) which involves washing and preparing the sperm before it is placed into the womb via a thin straw.

While IVF and similar technologies are only required for the minority of couples they are good at overcoming the more serious fertility issues such as damaged fallopian tubes or a very low sperm count. Although IVF is viewed as the best fertility treatment, its use needs to be balanced against the complications that can arise during treatment. IVF is a great treatment when it is needed, but its use should be limited to those that definitely need it.

Much of the stress of fertility treatment can be taken away by seeing the same doctor and nurse throughout the treatment so queries, questions and reassurance can be given in a timely and appropriate way.

So remember, while delays in conceiving can be anxious times, most people will conceive by themselves - and when help is needed there is a great deal that can be offered.

COMPREHENSIVE AND CONVENIENT CARE

The Lister Fertility Clinic and the Wellington Diagnostics and Outpatients Centre have recently collaborated – creating easier access to world-class fertility treatment

The Lister Fertility Clinic in Chelsea is the largest family centre in the UK. Since its opening in 1988 it has earned the reputation as one of the most successful fertility units in the country, with success rates well above the national average.

The Wellington Diagnostics and Outpatients Centre (WDOC), located in Golders Green, is a popular choice for local residents who want fast access to state-of-the-art imaging and diagnostics, GPs, and renowned consultants covering all forms of medicine.

Mr Gidon Lieberman will be based at WDOC, and offer patients

initial and follow-up consultations, arrange investigations and discuss different treatment options. There is no waiting time for treatment and patients can usually start treatment at a time that suits them.

TREATMENTS AVAILABLE

If necessary, a semen test can be arranged at The Lister Fertility Clinic prior to the initial appointment at WDOC. An ultrasound scan is normally carried out the same day of the consultation and results can be discussed that same day. Couples will be

able to have all their ovulation induction, cycle monitoring and blood tests at the centre in Golders Green, reducing the number of visits to The Lister Fertility Clinic.



After cycle preparation, egg collection and embryo transfer will be carried out at The Lister Fertility Centre in Chelsea.

This partnership of two prestigious centres will bring the best of The Lister Fertility Clinic's services closer to the North London community.

Top Tips

- Start taking folic acid
- Make sure you have been immunised against German measles
- Don't smoke
- Being overweight or underweight can affect your fertility
- Try not to over-analyse your menstrual cycle
- Seek help and advice early if you are worried
- Most fertility tests can be done quickly
- Most couples don't need any treatment
- Most problems can be helped

MEET THE CONSULTANT



Mr Gidon Lieberman BSc, MBChB, MD, MRCOG is a consultant gynaecologist and sub-specialist in reproductive medicine and surgery, based at the Wellington Diagnostics and Outpatients Centre in Golders Green.

He is also a consultant surgeon at The Whittington Hospital, and an honorary senior lecturer at University College Hospital, London.

His special interests include sub-fertility, PCOS, menstrual disorders and early pregnancy scanning.

The Wellington Diagnostics and Outpatients Centre in Golders Green, offers a full fertility and gynaecology diagnostic service with satellite IVF links with the Lister Fertility Clinic.

To arrange an appointment at the Wellington Diagnostics and Outpatients Centre, please contact The Enquiry Helpline on 020 7483 5148 or visit www.wellingtondiagnosticscentre.com