

# Fertility Facts

with Origin Fertility Care



**origin** FERTILITY  
CARE

**10 YEARS**  
IN FERTILITY CARE

# Fertility Facts

## What is infertility?

Infertility is defined by The World Health Organisation (WHO) as;  
*“the inability of a couple to conceive after a year or more of regular, unprotected sex”*

### There are two types of infertility

- **Primary Infertility** where pregnancy has never occurred
- **Secondary Infertility** where one or both members of the couple have previously conceived, but are unable to conceive again after a year of trying

To conceive a child a woman must ovulate i.e. release a healthy mature egg from one of her ovaries and the man must produce millions of mature, healthy motile sperm in the ejaculate.

Whilst a man continues to produce sperm throughout his reproductive life a woman is born with all the eggs she will ever have. Over the years, her supply is depleted. Of the 1-2 million eggs present at birth only 400-500 will ever make it to ovulation.

### When should we become concerned about not becoming pregnant?

When a couple has failed to conceive after one year of well-timed intercourse, or where the woman is older than age 35, after six months of well-timed intercourse they should seek expert advice.

Age is an extremely important factor in fertility, especially for the woman. Delaying testing and treatment may mean a reduced chance of pregnancy, as some causes of infertility worsen with time.

If a woman knows that she has endometriosis or polycystic ovarian disease, if the man has been sterilized or has known male factor infertility (low or no sperm count, poor morphology or motility, etc.), the couple should seek expert advice immediately.

## What causes Infertility?

The process of conception is complex and there are a number of possible reasons for infertility.

About one-third of infertility cases are related to male infertility, another third are related to female infertility, and another third are related to problems in both the man and woman, or remain unexplained.

## What are the most common causes of infertility?

Some of the more common causes of infertility are:

### Female

- Endometriosis
- Ovulatory problems
- Premature ovarian failure
- Blocked fallopian tubes
- Pelvic inflammatory disease
- Polycystic ovarian disease
- Sexually transmitted disease
- Fibroids

### Male

- Low sperm count - Oligozoospermia
- Poor sperm morphology (the shape of the sperm)
- Poor motility (the ability of the sperm to swim in the right direction)



# Fertility Facts

## Are there any symptoms a woman/couple may notice which might indicate infertility?

You should seek advice immediately if you have any of the following:

### For the woman:

- Extreme pain associated with ovulation or menstruation as you may have **endometriosis**
- No periods. Women who are anovulatory (don't ovulate) or who have very irregular cycles may be at risk for **polycystic ovarian disease**

### For the man:

- Any problems with erection or ejaculation.

Unmanaged, these problems can cause serious barriers to fertility. However, expert management and early treatment can preserve fertility. This does not necessarily mean invasive or expensive fertility treatment.

### Fertility Health check

For couples or individuals who may wish to check their fertility, we offer affordable tests that could give you peace of mind.

### Anti-Mullerian Hormone (AMH)

As a woman gets older there is a reduction in the number and quality of eggs left in the ovary. An AMH blood test will give an estimate of

the number of eggs available. It is predictive of ovarian reserve and reproductive potential.

It can be performed on any day of the month and is accurate even in women on the pill or other treatment.

### Transvaginal Ultrasound Scan (TVS)

TVS provides a picture of the womb and ovaries and can be used to check for problems which could affect your ability to conceive or carry a pregnancy. Ultrasound scans can be used to monitor if the eggs are developing properly and if they are being released from the ovaries. This is called ovarian follicle tracking.

### Semen Analysis

A semen analysis measures the amount of semen a man produces and determines the number and quality of sperm in the semen sample.



## What Treatments are available?

- **Ovulation Induction (OI)**- the ovaries are stimulated with fertility drugs to initiate ovulation (release of an egg). The most commonly prescribed fertility drug is Clomid but FSH injections are also used.
- **Intra Uterine Insemination (IUI)**- is a relatively simple infertility treatment, where a small tube is used to place specially washed sperm directly into the female reproductive tract, at the time of ovulation.
- **OI/IUI** - is a combination of drug treatment and intrauterine insemination
- **In Vitro Fertilisation (IVF)** - literally means fertilization "in glass" is the process where a woman's eggs are removed from her ovaries and fertilized in the laboratory using a specially prepared sperm sample from her partner or a sperm donor. The resulting embryos are then transferred back to her body a few days later.
- **Intra Cytoplasmic sperm Injection (ICSI)** similar to IVF in that sperm and eggs are collected from each partner. However unlike IVF where the sperm and eggs are mixed together in a petri-dish and the sperm fertilizes the egg naturally, with ICSI, a single sperm is picked up with a fine glass needle and injected directly into the egg. This technique is used when there are severe sperm problems or when treatment has been unsuccessful using IVF.
- **Donor sperm** - Donor sperm can be used by a couple where the man has no or poor quality sperm in his ejaculate, has a genetic disease that he does not want to pass on to a child, or has trouble producing sperm in the normal way. Donor sperm treatment can also be used by same sex female couples or single women who wish to have their own child.
- **Egg Donation** - There are many reasons why some women cannot use their own eggs for fertility treatment, including premature menopause and following cancer treatment which causes infertility. Their only chance of having a baby is by using an egg donated by another woman. This donation can either be by known donor, friend or family member, or by an unknown donor sourced by the clinic.
- **Egg Sharing** - Many couples with fertility problems are not eligible for NHS funded treatment but cannot afford to pay for private treatment. Egg sharing provides IVF treatment for infertile couples who are prepared to share their eggs with a recipient. The recipient funds most of the cost for both treatment cycles. This significantly reduces the cost of IVF for egg-sharing donors.

If you would like further information on any of the above treatment options please contact the clinic for an information sheet.

# Fertility Facts

## What is the cost of fertility testing and treatment?

There is a wide range of cost options for fertility tests and treatment. If you want to attend the clinic to discuss your fertility or simply ask some questions please contact our administration team who will book an appointment for you. If you decide to proceed with any fertility investigations or treatment there will be a cost but this will be explained during your consultation.

To see our full price list, please visit our website at [www.originfertilitycare.com](http://www.originfertilitycare.com) or call the clinic and we can send you a copy of the price list.

## What is Secondary infertility ?

Secondary infertility is where a couple do not conceive after one year of trying, despite having conceived children in the past without any problems. Secondary infertility is a common problem.

Approximately 10% of couples who already have a child go on to experience secondary infertility.

Assuming that infertility "can't happen" to them, a couple experiencing secondary infertility may delay seeking help for their problems getting pregnant, and wait longer than the recommended 6 months for women over 35, or longer than a year for women younger than 35.

But delaying testing and treatment may mean a lower treatment success rate, as some causes of infertility worsen with time.

If you want to attend the clinic for a consultation to discuss your fertility or simply ask some questions please contact our admin team who will book an appointment for you.

## What causes Secondary Infertility ?

You may be wondering why you're having trouble conceiving this time, when you didn't have trouble in the past. It's a good question, but one that unfortunately may not have an answer.

Age may be a factor, especially if you were a lot younger when you had your first child, or you had a late start to your family. Some causes of infertility may worsen over time, like endometriosis or growing fibroids.

If you have gained significant weight since your first child, that can also lead to problems conceiving.

But just as often, there are no obvious reasons why you can't conceive this time compared to last time.



## What should I do if I think I might have Fertility problems ?

Testing and treatment for secondary infertility is the same as for primary infertility. Both the man and woman need to be checked.

### Don't wait

Time is an extremely important factor in fertility, especially for the woman.

- A woman's fertility is at its highest in her 20's
- Natural fertility declines as she reaches her 30s, and even more sharply from age 35.
- As a woman gets older her chances of getting pregnant naturally reduce, because her eggs decline in quantity and quality
- Women aged 35 are six times more likely to have problems conceiving than women of 25
- Older women are at greater risk of pregnancy complications and miscarriage.

Delaying testing and treatment may mean a lower treatment success rate, as some causes of infertility worsen with time.

If you are concerned about your fertility or would just like some reassurance why not visit the team at Origin to book a consultation.





## Why Wait?

Call us on

**028 9076 1713**

to book an appointment.

You can also visit our website at

**[www.originfertilitycare.com](http://www.originfertilitycare.com)**

or follow us on

**Facebook and Twitter.**

Origin Fertility Care

380 Belmont Road

Belfast BT4 2NF

T +44 (0) 28 9076 1713

F +44 (0) 28 9076 9752

E [info@originfertilitycare.com](mailto:info@originfertilitycare.com)

[www.originfertilitycare.com](http://www.originfertilitycare.com)

---

In partnership with

**3fivetwo**  
HEALTHCARE

[www.3fivetwo.com](http://www.3fivetwo.com)

**origin** FERTILITY  
CARE

