

YOU ARE NOT ALONE

A guide to fertility treatment

1 IN 7 COUPLES STRUGGLE TO CONCEIVE NATURALLY¹

You might not have expected trying for a baby to be so difficult or to take such a long time. Discovering that you have difficulty conceiving may have an extremely negative emotional impact; often feeling feel isolated, frustrated, heartbroken and lonely. These are all understandable and normal reactions to a situation where you feel out of control. Understanding that infertility is a condition that affects many people and accepting you are not alone, is the positive first step.

SPECIALIST TEAM

Talking about infertility can be very difficult, especially at first, and deciding to seek medical help is a big step forward. Understanding more about your condition and the treatments available will help you to make an informed decision on the best course of action that's right for you.

It is important to find a specialist team you feel comfortable with and trust to carry out the appropriate investigations so you can understand what is

preventing you from conceiving. If you choose to have your investigations with BMI healthcare, your chosen specialist team will be with you every step of the way to ensure you feel informed and supported. Our fertility specialists will be able to advise on the most appropriate treatment if required, that's right for you. They have put together this guide to help you understand more about infertility and your journey to conception.

WHAT IS INFERTILITY?

It is a condition of the reproductive system defined by the failure to conceive after one year of regular unprotected

sexual intercourse. Statistics show that 84%² of people will conceive naturally within one year.

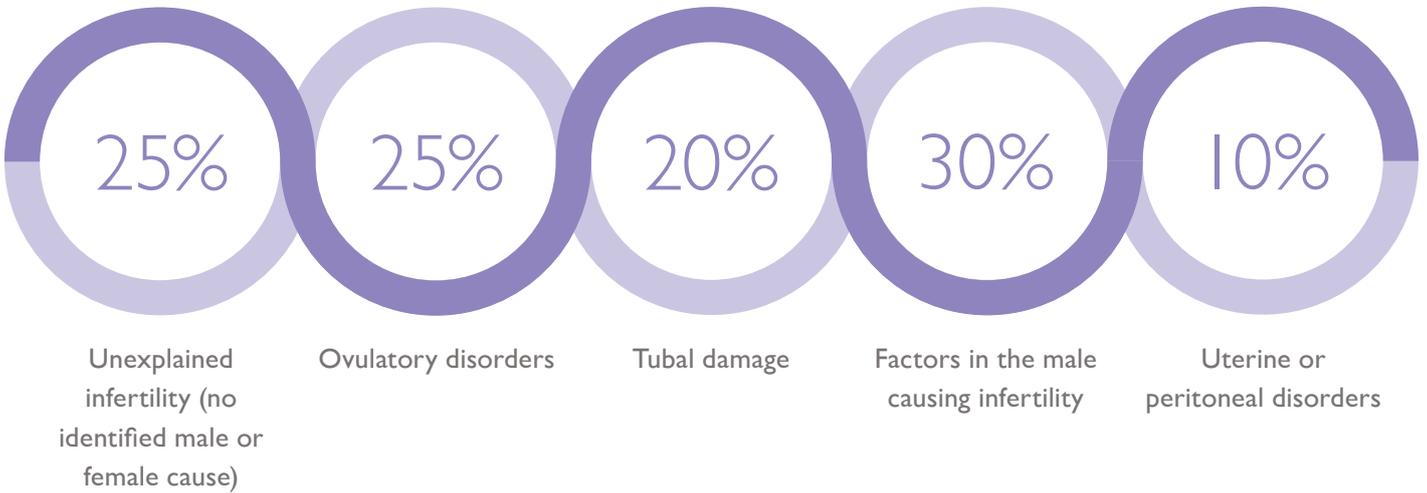
Infertility affects both men and women. In women infertility is most commonly caused by problems with ovulation and the release of the egg. For men infertility in most cases is linked to the quantity and quality of sperm. Many people have no idea they have fertility issues until they start trying for a baby. That is because signs and symptoms of infertility are often related to other underlying conditions.



¹ Source: National Institute for Health and Care Excellence <https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/cg156/chapter/Context>. Accessed March 2017.

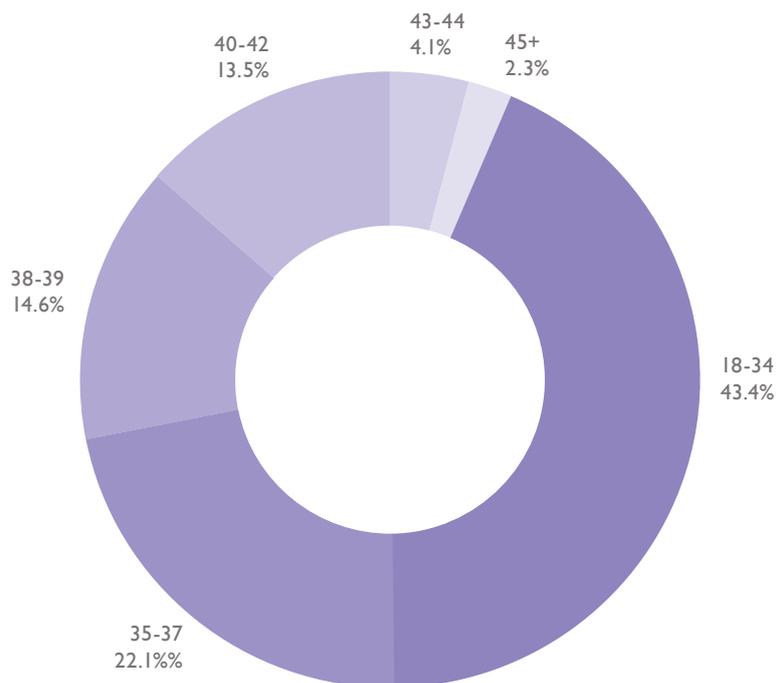
² Source: NHS Choices. Infertility. Available at <http://www.nhs.uk/Conditions/Infertility/Pages/Introduction.aspx>. Accessed March 2017.

MAIN CAUSES OF INFERTILITY IN THE UK



**figures are not exact but approximate prevalence only*
 Source: National Institute for Health and Care Excellence. www.nice.org.uk/guidance/cg156/chapter/Context. Accessed March 2017.

IVF CYCLES BY AGE GROUPS



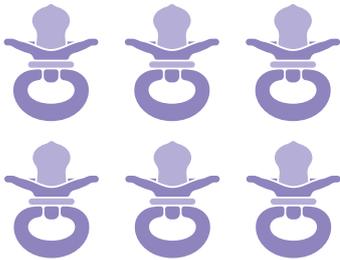
Source: Human Fertilisation & Embryology Authority. Fertility treatment 2014. Trends and figures, published online http://www.hfea.gov.uk/docs/HFEA_Fertility_treatment_Trends_and_figures_2014.pdf. Accessed March 2017.

Percentage of all IVF cycles performed, by age group, 2014

FERTILITY FACTORS YOU MAY NOT KNOW

2/3

of all fertility treatments worldwide is ICSI (intra cytoplasmic sperm injection), making ICSI the most common fertilisation technique. ICSI is used when the sperm count is low; conventional IVF (in-vitro fertilisation) accounts for only 1/3¹



Only 4 in 10 IVF treatments are funded by the NHS²

50%

of the fresh IVF treatments in the UK involved ICSI in 2014²

10 YEARS

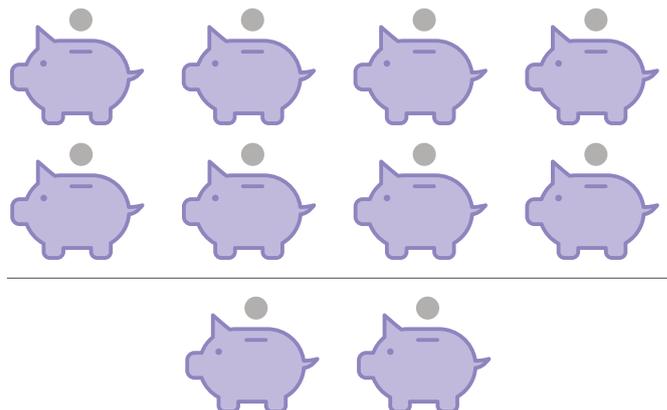
is the maximum time that eggs are allowed to be kept frozen²

5.4 MILLION

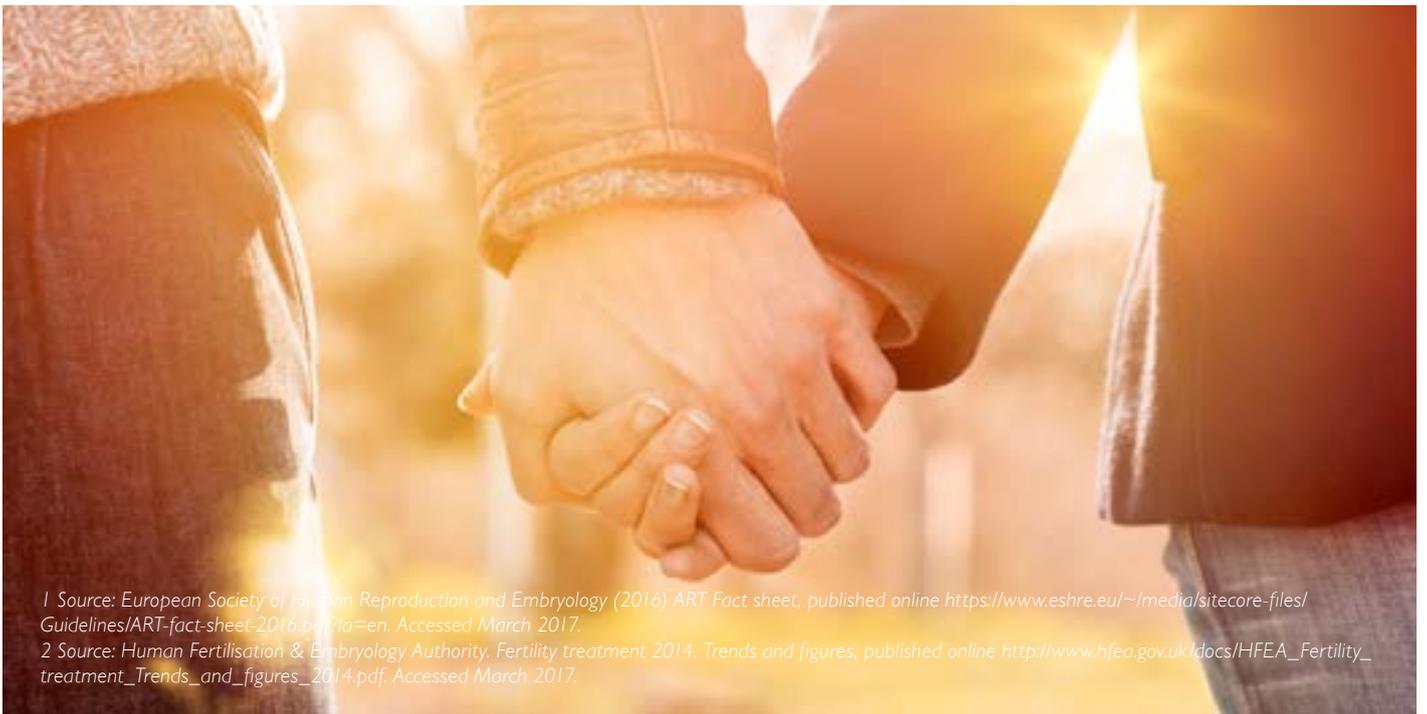
babies were born worldwide after IVF treatment, since the first IVF baby in 1978¹

2.1%

of all babies born in the UK were conceived as result of IVF treatment in 2013²



Over 8 in 10 Donor Insemination cycles are funded privately²



¹ Source: European Society of Human Reproduction and Embryology (2016) ART Fact sheet, published online <https://www.eshre.eu/~/media/sitecore-files/Guidelines/ART-fact-sheet-2016.pdf?1a=en>. Accessed March 2017.

² Source: Human Fertilisation & Embryology Authority. Fertility treatment 2014. Trends and figures, published online http://www.hfea.gov.uk/docs/HFEA_Fertility_treatment_Trends_and_figures_2014.pdf. Accessed March 2017.

SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS



WHAT ARE THE COMMON SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF INFERTILITY?

While there are a number of factors that can contribute to infertility in men and women, the signs and symptoms can vary so much from one person to another.

Remember, if you notice any signs, it doesn't necessarily mean you have issues with your fertility. However, if you are concerned you should visit your GP who will be able to refer you onto a fertility specialist for further investigation.

FEMALE SYMPTOMS MAY INCLUDE:

- **Irregular periods** may also be symptomatic of hormone issues or polycystic ovarian syndrome(PCOS)
- **Painful or heavy periods** may also be symptomatic of endometriosis
- **No periods** could also be caused by stress, heavy workouts or being underweight
- **Pain during sexual intercourse** may also be symptomatic of hormone imbalances and various other conditions

MALE SYMPTOMS MAY INCLUDE:

- **Change in sexual drive** also linked to changing hormones
- **Problems maintaining erection** also linked to hormone changes and various other conditions
- **Testicle pain or swelling** may be symptomatic of many other conditions
- **Problems with ejaculation** also linked to physiological or other clinical conditions

WHAT ARE THE FERTILITY RISK FACTORS I SHOULD BE AWARE OF?

- **Weight** being overweight or underweight has a direct impact on your fertility. The recommended BMI for women is between 20 – 25 and for men is between 18 – 25. Weight can impact on the quality of sperm, hormone balance and can cause possible complications during pregnancy.
- **Diet** a healthy balanced diet can have a positive impact on the fertility of both men and women. Eating healthily simply means having the right quantity of food from different food groups. A healthy, nutritious diet for men is particularly important in regards to producing healthy sperm.
- **Alcohol** cutting down drinking will improve your chances of conceiving. For men drinking will affect the quality of sperm produced. The recommended allowance is no more than 14 units per week (equivalent to about 7 pints of beer or 14 single measures of spirits per week). For women who are planning to get pregnant, it's best to avoid drinking alcohol.
- **Smoking** there is no safe limit for smoking, men and women who are trying for a baby should stop smoking. Research shows that smoking affects the quality of sperm and egg. For women, even passive smoking can affect their chances of conceiving.
- **Age** fertility declines with age. Women in their late 30s will have naturally less chance of conceiving and male fertility starts to decline at around 45 years of age. Trying for a baby at an older age doesn't mean it won't happen, it may just take longer.
- **Family** women whose immediate family presents history of endometriosis or PCOS.
- **Stress** being stressed can lower sperm quality and unbalance the ovulation cycle.



ARE YOU CONCERNED ABOUT YOUR FERTILITY?

If you are concerned about your fertility, why not speak to a specialist to find out what investigations, help and support is available. We provide a consultant led rapid access fertility services at our private fertility centres across the UK.

Our Consultants, who are supported by specialist nurses and other healthcare professionals, will explain the options available and will aim to make you feel at ease, so you are able to make an informed decision that's right for you. You can self-refer to one of our fertility centres or ask your GP or gynaecologist to arrange a referral on your behalf.

FERTILITY SERVICES AT BMI HEALTHCARE

BMI Healthcare is a well-established, successful provider of a wide range of assisted reproductive therapies to support you through whatever stage you are in your fertility journey.

Our fertility Centres are licensed and inspected by the Human Fertilization and Embryology Authority (HFEA). The HFEA is who regulates and inspects all fertilization clinics in the UK. All investigations and treatments provided are consultant led providing you the reassurance that you are in safe hands.

With BMI Healthcare you can make a fully informed decision about your fertility treatment and proceed with the confidence of knowing we will be with you every step of the way.

FIND OUT MORE TODAY

For an informal conversation about fertility investigation and treatment options or to arrange an initial appointment with a consultant, please call our fertility team on:

0800 092 9029 or visit www.bmihealthcare.co.uk/fertility

*Terms and conditions apply. BMI Card is a credit facility offered by BMI Healthcare Limited, BMI Healthcare House, 3 Paris Garden, London, SE1 8ND. 0% interest for 12 months then 0.79% per month, representative 9.9% APR variable. Up to £20,000 available (subject to status). Monthly repayment 5% of balance or £25 whichever is greater or balance if lower than £25.

BMI Healthcare

www.bmihealthcare.co.uk/fertility