

Understanding fertility health

If you've been having regular sex for a year or longer without conceiving, or for six months if you're over 35, you may consider having your fertility health checked.

Or if you have any medical problems or are taking any medication that might affect your fertility you should also consider checking your fertility health.

Even if you are not currently trying for a baby you may be wondering, or have concerns about your fertility health. There are various screening tests that can be done to evaluate fertility for both women and men.

If you've any worries about your fertility health or you're simply looking for reassurance that everything's okay, a fertility assessment is right for you. Find out more about what's involved for men or for women, or to book an appointment, contact us.

Your fertility can be affected by

Age

Both women and men are at their most fertile in their early twenties but many people today wait until they're older to have children. But fertility declines over time, and you should consider this if you plan to have children later.

Female fertility declines rapidly after the age of 35, and one-third of couples in which the woman is over 35 have fertility problems, this rises to two-thirds when the woman is over 40. This is due to the decline in the quality of the eggs released by the ovaries, which is why some women now consider egg freezing as a way of preserving their fertility until they're ready to start a family.

Women over 35 are also less likely to become pregnant as a result of fertility treatments, including IVF, and are more likely to have a miscarriage if they do become pregnant.

Men's fertility gradually declines from around the age of 40, but most men are able to father children into their 50s and beyond. When it comes to fertility, age matters.

Medical conditions and illnesses

A fertility problem could be because you've had surgery that may have affected your reproductive organs, or because you've had a sexually transmitted infection (STI), such as chlamydia, that may have damaged your fertility; these can affect both men and women, and can also cause serious problems. Other conditions and illnesses, such as polycystic ovary syndrome (PCOS), endometriosis, ovarian and testicular disorders or previous cancer can also affect your fertility.

Stop smoking to protect your fertility

Women who smoke 20 cigarettes a day experience the menopause on average two years earlier. Men who smoke risk damaging their sperm.

Healthy weight

Being underweight or overweight can lower your chances of conceiving.

Polycystic ovary syndrome (PCOS), a cause of infertility in women is made worse by being overweight or obese. Being underweight may stop you having periods.

Overall health

As well as drinking too much alcohol which can have a harmful impact on your fertility, your lifestyle, health, and medical history, can all affect your fertility.

We may be able to identify some simple lifestyle changes, as well as work out which tests or treatments should come next, if needed.

Screening Tests

If you haven't yet had any tests, we'll then suggest some screening as part of a fertility assessment. These may include the following tests:

Semen Analysis

In about one-third of cases, fertility problems are due to the male partner. Sometimes, a lack of sperm or sperm that are not moving properly can cause a failure to conceive. The male partner will be asked to produce a sperm sample so we can analyse it.

Hormone screening including: Anti-mullerian hormone (AMH) and Follicle stimulating hormone (FSH levels)

These blood tests are used to estimate a woman's ovarian reserve and may indicate your remaining time left to conceive. They are also be useful in evaluating ovarian function and possibly predicting the onset of menopause

Antral Follicle Count (AFC)

This test is carried by ultrasound scan to estimate your ovarian reserve and the expected response to ovarian stimulating drugs, and the chance for successful pregnancy with in vitro fertilization

Blood tests to check ovulation

Levels of hormones in a woman's blood are closely linked to ovulation, when the ovaries release an egg into the fallopian tubes. Hormone imbalances can cause ovulation problems, and a blood test can help determine whether this is happening. Going through a phase of not having periods, or having irregular periods, are also signs of ovulation problems. The most common cause of ovulation problems is polycystic ovary syndrome.

Test for chlamydia

Chlamydia is the most common STI in the UK. It can cause pelvic inflammatory disease and fertility problems. We can test for chlamydia for men and women. This can be a urine test or a swab.

Pelvic Ultrasound scan

An ultrasound scan can be carried out to check the woman's ovaries, womb and fallopian tubes. In a transvaginal ultrasound scan, a small ultrasound probe is placed in the vagina. This scan can help us check the health of your ovaries and womb.

Certain conditions that can affect the womb, such as endometriosis and fibroids, can prevent pregnancy from happening. The scan can also check for blockages in your fallopian tubes (the tubes that connect the ovaries and the womb), which may be stopping eggs from travelling along the tubes and into the womb.

Hysterosalpingo-contrast-sonography (HyCoSy)

HyCoSy is an outpatient ultrasound procedure used to assess the patency of the fallopian tubes, as well as detect abnormalities of the uterus and endometrium.

The initial part of the HyCoSy procedure uses saline (like a saline sonohysterogram) to assess the endometrial cavity for problems such as endometrial polyps, submucous fibroids and congenital uterine abnormalities (such as uterine septum).

What next?

Depending on what we find we might then recommend other, more specialised tests to look into things in more detail.

What your results show will help us to decide on your next steps.

If they show that there's something affecting your fertility, and that you might need help to start your family we'll invite you to make an appointment to talk to one of our consultants and discuss your options. We might be able to suggest some lifestyle changes you can make to improve your chances of having a baby.

In some cases we may be able to find a cause for previously unexplained fertility problems, so we can help you access the most appropriate treatment to help you start a family.

Fertility assessment packages

Men

Free medical consultant consultation to take your history and offer fertility advice
Semen Analysis
BMI calculation
Medical history review
Fitness and pre-conception advice
Follow up consultant consultation to review and discuss your results

Package cost: £220

Women

Free medical consultant consultation to take your history and offer fertility advice
Chlamydia screening
BMI calculation
Fitness and pre-conception advice
Medical history review
Blood tests to check ovulation
Hormone screening including:
Anti-mullerian hormone (AMH)
Follicle stimulating hormone (FSH levels)
Antral Follicle Count (AFC)
Hysterosalpingo-contrast-sonography (HyCoSy)
Follow up consultant consultation to review and discuss your results

Package cost: £750

Couples (male and female)

Free medical consultant consultation to take your history and offer fertility advice
Chlamydia screening
BMI calculation
Medical history review
Fitness and pre-conception advice
Semen Analysis
Blood tests to check ovulation
Hormone screening including:
Anti-mullerian hormone (AMH) and Follicle stimulating hormone (FSH levels)
Antral Follicle Count (AFC)
Hysterosalpingo-contrast-sonography (HyCoSy)
Follow up consultation to review and discuss your results

Package cost: £850

Diagnostic tests are also available on an individual cost basis

If you think you might be interested in one of our treatments, or if you'd like to talk to someone about your options, there are lots of ways to get started

- ◆ Book in for a free 1-2-1 consultation with our medical consultants or fertility specialist nurses
- ◆ Book a consultation and fertility assessment
- ◆ Speak to us to find out more.

You can do all of the above by calling us on

01162585922

or emailing us at:

info@leicesterfertilitycentre.org.uk

If you have any worries about your fertility health or you are simply looking for reassurance that everything is okay, a fertility assessment is right for you



Leicester Fertility Centre Fertility assessment options

Fertility Fitness



Leicester Fertility Centre
Caring at its best



University Hospitals of Leicester **NHS**
NHS Trust