

Glossary

Abandoned IVF cycle	Defined as an IVF cycle where an egg collection procedure has not been undertaken. Usually occurs due to a lack of response (where fewer than three mature follicles are present) or conversely if there has been an excessive response to ovarian stimulation and the patient is at risk of severe ovarian hyperstimulation syndrome (OHSS). May also be referred to as a 'cancelled cycle'.
Artificial insemination (AI)	AI is the introduction of sperm into cervix or uterine cavity. Intrauterine insemination (IUI) is a type of AI undertaken at a fertility clinic where sperm is filtered to produce a concentrated 'healthy' sample which is placed directly into the uterus. AI undertaken at home would normally be intra-cervical insemination (ICI).
Assisted conception treatment (ACT)	The collective name for treatments designed to lead to conception by means other than sexual intercourse. Includes: intrauterine insemination (IUI), in vitro fertilisation (IVF), intracytoplasmic sperm injection (ICSI) and donor insemination (DI).
Azoospermia	Where there are no sperm in the ejaculate.
Cryopreservation	The freezing and storage of embryos, sperm or eggs for future use in IVF treatment cycles.
Donor insemination (DI)	DI is a type of fertility treatment in which high quality donor sperm is injected directly into the womb (IUI) or cervix (ICI). DI is commonly used when either the male partner has no sperm or for lesbian couples/ single women.
Egg (oocyte) donation	The process by which a fertile woman donates her eggs to be used in the treatment of others.
Embryo transfer	The procedure in which one or more embryos are placed in the uterus.
Embryo transfer strategies	Defines the number of embryos that should be transferred in an embryo transfer procedure, depending on factors such as the age of the woman and the quality of the embryos.
Endometriosis	A condition where tissue similar to the lining of the womb starts to grow in other places, such as the ovaries and fallopian tubes.
Fertilisation	The union of an egg and sperm.
Fertility policies	CCGs are responsible for commissioning most fertility treatments; most therefore have policies in place specifying which interventions are funded and eligibility criteria for access to these. These policies typically explain when the CCG will fund fertility treatments for people experiencing infertility and assisted conception treatments for patients who require interventions for other reasons e.g. fertility preservation for patients due to undergo a gonadotoxic treatment.
Fertility preservation (FP)	Fertility preservation involves freezing eggs, sperm, embryos or reproductive tissue with the aim of having biological children in the future.
Fresh IVF cycle	Comprises an episode of ovarian stimulation and the transfer of embryos created that have not previously been frozen.
Frozen embryo transfer (FET)	Where an excess of embryos is available following a fresh cycle, these embryos may be frozen for future use. Once thawed, these embryos may be transferred to the patient as a 'frozen embryo transfer'. Also known as a 'frozen IVF cycle'.
Full IVF cycle	Defined by NICE as one episode of ovarian stimulation and the transfer of any resultant fresh and frozen embryo(s).
Gonadal dysgenesis	Abnormal development of a gonad (ovary or testicle).
Gonadotoxic treatment	Treatments that can cause infertility such as some chemotherapies.

Infertility	Infertility is the period of time people have been trying to get pregnant (conceive) without success after which formal investigation is justified and possibly treatment implemented.
In vitro fertilisation (IVF)	IVF involves ovarian stimulation and then collection of a woman's eggs. They are then fertilised with sperm in a lab. If fertilisation is successful, the embryo is allowed to develop for between two and six days and is then transferred back to the woman's womb to hopefully continue to a pregnancy. Ideally one embryo is transferred to minimise the risk of multiple pregnancy. In older women, or those with poor quality embryos, two may be transferred. It is best practice to freeze any remaining good quality embryos to use later on in a frozen embryo transfer if the first transfer is unsuccessful.
Intracytoplasmic sperm injection (ICSI)	IVF with ICSI treatment is similar to standard IVF. However, instead of mixing the sperm with the eggs and leaving them to fertilise in a dish, an embryologist will inject a single sperm into each mature egg. This maximises the chance of fertilisation as it bypasses any potential problems the sperm may have in penetrating the egg.
Intrauterine insemination (IUI)	IUI is a type of fertility treatment in which the best quality sperm are separated from sperm that are sluggish or non-motile. This sperm is then placed directly in the womb. This can either be performed with the woman's partner's sperm or donor sperm (known as donor insemination or DI). Sometimes ovarian stimulation is used in conjunction with IUI.
Male factor infertility	Problems with male fertility are related to sperm, sperm production and the reproductive tract.
Men/ male	Due to the nature of policies on assisted reproductive technologies, it is necessary to refer to the sex of patients on occasion. This document therefore refers to 'men' and 'male'. When these terms are used in this document, unless otherwise specified, this refers to sex defined by biological anatomy. It is acknowledged that this may not necessarily be the gender to which individual patients identify.
Natural cycle IVF	An IVF procedure in which one or more oocytes are collected from the ovaries during a spontaneous menstrual cycle without any drug use.
NICE	National Institute for Health and Care Excellence. NICE provide national guidance and advice to improve health and social care. NICE guidelines are evidence-based recommendations for health and care in England. Organisations commissioning and delivering services are expected to take the recommendations contained within NICE clinical guidelines into account when planning and delivering services. NICE has published a Clinical Guideline (CG 156) on fertility problems.
Oophorectomy	An operation to remove one or both ovaries.
Ovarian Hyper-Stimulation Syndrome (OHSS)	A condition in which the ovarian response to stimulation results in clinical problems, including abdominal distension, dehydration and potentially serious complications due to thrombosis and lung and kidney dysfunction. It is more likely in women who are excessively sensitive to medicines used for ovarian stimulation.
Ovarian reserve	A woman's fertility is related to the number of eggs remaining in her ovaries, referred to as 'ovarian reserve', which influences the chance of becoming pregnant.
Ovarian stimulation	Stimulation of the ovary to achieve growth and development of ovarian follicles with the aim of increasing the number of eggs released.
Ovarian tissue cryopreservation	Involves removing and freezing ovarian tissue from a girl or woman. At a later date, the ovarian tissue strips can be thawed and either re-implanted into the ovary, to allow them to try to conceive naturally, or the eggs can be retrieved and fertilised in vitro and the embryo implanted in the uterus.
Pathological	One that relates to medical conditions/ diseases (physical or psychological).

problem	
Pre-implantation genetic diagnosis	A technique used to identify inherited genetic defects in embryos created through IVF. Only embryos with a low genetic risk for the condition are then transferred back to the woman's uterus. Any resulting pregnancy should be unaffected by the condition for which the diagnosis is performed.
Premature ovarian failure	When a woman's periods stop before the age of 45. Also known as primary ovarian insufficiency or early menopause.
Rhesus (Rh) isoimmunisation	A condition where antibodies in a pregnant woman's blood destroy her baby's blood cells. Also known as rhesus disease.
Sperm donation	The process by which a fertile man donates his sperm to be used in the treatment of others. The HFEA regulates sperm donation undertaken at UK fertility clinics.
Sperm washing	Sperm washing is used to reduce the viral load (for example, of HIV) in prepared sperm to a very low or undetectable level. The washed sperm can then be transferred to the women using IUI or used to fertilise eggs in IVF or ICSI.
Supernumerary embryos	Un-transferred embryos created from a fresh IVF cycle.
Surgical sperm retrieval (SSR)	Surgical sperm retrieval means extracting sperm by a surgical procedure. Types of SSR include: percutaneous epididymal sperm aspiration (PESA), microsurgical epididymal sperm aspiration (MESA), testicular sperm aspiration (TESA), testicular sperm extraction (TESE) and microscope-assisted testicular sperm extraction (MicroTESE).
Surrogacy	Surrogacy is where a woman carries and gives birth to a baby for another person or couple. This may involve the eggs of the surrogate, the intended mother or a donor.
Unsuccessful cycle of IVF/ ICSI	Includes failure of fertilisation, failure of development of embryos and failure to conceive following transfer of embryos.
Women/ female	Due to the nature of policies on assisted reproductive technologies, it is necessary to refer to the sex of patients on occasion. This document therefore refers to 'women' and 'female'. When these terms are used in this document, unless otherwise specified, this refers to sex defined by biological anatomy. It is acknowledged that this may not necessarily be the gender to which individual patients identify.