

# INTRAUTERINE INSEMINATION (IUI)

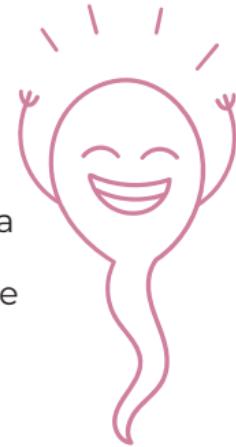
Infertility concerns are very commonly experienced among couples. Depending on the cause of concern, there are many ways in which your gynaecologist may choose to treat infertility; one such way is intrauterine insemination.

## **What is Intrauterine Insemination (IUI)?**

IUI is a procedure where concentrated & healthy sperms are placed directly into the uterus using a small catheter. This procedure is performed by your fertility expert.

## **How does IUI help in infertility?**

During a natural conception procedure, the sperms have to pass from the vagina to the uterus, through a narrow tube-like channel called the cervix. Following the entry into the uterus, the sperms travel to fallopian tubes- connected to the uterus, where they fertilize the ova/egg for a successful pregnancy. In this way only 5% of sperms are able to reach the uterus in a healthy state, thereby reducing the chances of fertility, especially in cases where some underlying problem exists. With IUI concentrated sperm count reaches the uterus directly, thereby increasing the chances for you to get pregnant.



## **When can IUI be helpful?**

Infertility exists due to various underlying causes. Some specific causes in which a couple can expect to be benefitted from IUI include -

- Underlying problems of the cervix and cervical mucus problems:**

**mucus problems:** Sperms travel to the uterus through the cervix. The mucus secreted by the cervix acts as a lubricant which helps sperms swim through this channel easily. In case of any underlying pathology of the cervix or the quality or quantity of cervical mucus, IUI can be helpful.

- Problems with the quality or quantity of sperm count:**

**count:** By placement of concentrated and high-quality sperms directly into the uterus, couples with reduced or unhealthy sperms can be benefitted.

- Erectile dysfunction:** In cases of erectile dysfunction, the natural passage of sperm to the uterus is affected, thus IUI benefits in such cases.

- Unexplained infertility:** IUI has shown maximum benefits in couples with unexplained infertility.

Apart from the above, IUI also helps in cases where the sperm donor is different or in cases where a single woman wants to conceive naturally.

## **Which tests are needed prior to an IUI?**

Prior to deciding on treatment for infertility, your gynaecologist will suggest a detailed check-up for you and your partner. Such a check-up will involve tests like blood tests, ultrasound, semen analysis, or other specific diagnostic tests such as a saline infusion sonogram. Apart from these your gynaecologist will also perform a detailed physical examination and take a detailed history from you and your partner for a thorough understanding.



## **What to expect during the IUI procedure?**

The IUI procedure involved three basic steps- Ovulation, Semen preparation & Insemination.

**Ovulation:** Since IUI involves the placement of sperms into the uterus, the best time to expect maximum chances of conception is during ovulation. Your gynaecologist will employ tests to check for your ovulation time, and prescribe you medication for ovulation if required.

**Semen preparation:** After the collection of semen from your partner or a sperm donor, it is prepared using sperm washing. In this process, a concentrated healthy sperm count is prepared for insemination.

**Insemination:** Prepared semen is inseminated into the uterus, employing a catheter, and the procedure takes approximately 15-20 minutes. After this, you may be required to lie down for 10 minutes following which you can go back home as usual.

## **Does IUI require anaesthesia?**

IUI is minimally - invasive and does not require anaesthesia. The procedure is not painful; however one can expect some cramping following IUI.

## **What to expect after IUI?**

One can expect mild cramping and spotting for a day or two after IUI. This is similar to natural conception.

## **What are my chances of getting pregnant after IUI?**

The chances of getting pregnant with an IUI are the same as that in cases of normal conception. In case of specific infertility concerns, with pathology lying in the cervix or sperms IUI benefits tremendously.

## **How early can I expect to get pregnant after IUI?**

Within two weeks of performing an IUI, your fertility expert will test you for pregnancy by employing blood tests and ultrasound.

## **How different is IUI from IVF?**

IVF is a more invasive procedure and requires more steps. Whereas IUI involves simple insemination of sperms in the uterus, IVF is a process of fertilising the egg outside the womb which is then transferred to the uterus. For more details refer to our brochure on IVF.

All cases of infertility are unique, and the success rate and risks associated with a procedure depend on the individual health condition. Ankura hospital for women and children, has a team of expert obstetricians and gynaecologists who guide you through each step of infertility treatment.



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