



## PATIENT'S FACT SHEET: **INTRAUTERINE INSEMINATION (IUI)**

IUI may be recommended as part of your fertility treatment for several reasons:

- Male factor infertility with decreased sperm count or motility.
- Donor sperm insemination.
- Part of a treatment plan for fertility treatment that includes the use of ovulation inducing drugs (clomiphene or gonadotropins) which may decrease cervical mucus.
- Other mechanical factors present that may make intercourse unsuccessful in getting the sperm deposited near the cervix.

### **How is IUI done?**

IUI is done simply in our office, usually at an appointment first thing in the morning. The timing is done by using an ovulation predictor kit (we recommend ClearBlue® or OvuQuick®), or by using ultrasound for egg follicle assessment. Often ovulation will have been triggered by an injection on HCG, about 36 hours before the planned IUI. We generally only recommend one IUI per cycle; with careful timing this is as effective and certainly less costly and inconvenient than having 2 inseminations over 2 days.

Unless you are doing donor insemination, you or your partner needs to bring in the semen specimen, in a sterile cup which we will provide. We will confirm a time with you; generally it will be around 8 or 8:30AM. The specimen is best collected at home, kept at body temperature (under your arm or close to the body is best, don't cook it with a hot water bottle or your car heater!) and brought to the office within an hour. If you live more than an hour from the office, you will need to collect nearby or even in our locked bathroom (although this is certainly less ideal and can be more challenging).\*

The specimen is washed by the nurses in a procedure that takes about an hour. The semen is washed from the sperms, and the sperms are then concentrated and suspended in a small amount (less than 1 cc) of special fluid. The sperm are "capacitated," very motile, concentrated with the less normal sperm left behind. A sperm count and motility assessment is done before and after the washing procedure. The washed sperm are kept in our incubator until the woman is ready for the insemination (usually a short time, but could be up to 2-3 hours).

The washed concentrated sperm is then placed into the woman's uterus in a generally painless procedure with a small flexible catheter. Some women do experience some cramping. (We advise some ibuprofen an hour before as prevention). The woman is free to leave and resume her busy life immediately. Rarely, if there is spillback from the uterus, we may recommend 15 minutes of rest after the procedure before leaving the office.

Intercourse the night after IUI is a good idea. It's more romantic, certainly. And, there are endorphins released and other "immeasurable" benefits of intercourse that may aid in the conception process!

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\*Erectile dysfunction may occur in this situation because of the strain and performance pressure felt by the male partner. If this is becoming an issue for you, please talk to us. In this day of Viagra®, help is available to address this problem.