

# Frequently asked questions during an IVF cycle

Here are some of the most common questions our patients have about their IVF cycle. Should you have any additional questions or concerns, please contact your primary nurse.

## What can I take for headaches and other pain?

- Regular or Extra Strength Tylenol is ok to take before and during your cycle.
- Avoid taking medications containing ibuprofen such as Motrin and Advil. Do not take any herbal medicines unless approved by your doctor.

## What can I take for a cold or allergies?

- Increasing your amount of oral fluids will definitely help with those symptoms. You can also take plain cough syrup, cough drops, Tylenol, Afrin Nasal Spray, Benadryl, and Sudafed. Claritin can be used sparingly.
- You should try to limit antihistamines or allergy treatments as much as possible unless symptoms are severe.
- Remember, being healthy far outweighs any theoretical risk a medication can have.

## What can I take for nausea and vomiting or heartburn?

- Small frequent meals will help with these symptoms. You can also try Tums, crackers, ginger ale, gingersnaps, ginger teas or candies, lemon drops, and peppermint.
- Avoiding intense odors, spicy or greasy food will also help.

## What can I take for constipation or diarrhea?

- For constipation, increase fluids, fruits and fiber. Non-chemical stool softeners/laxatives like Colace and Metamucil may be taken if needed.
- For diarrhea, remember to stay well hydrated and try the B.R.A.T. diet that consists of bananas, rice, apples, and toast. Kaopectate also will provide some relief.

## Should I change my diet during a cycle?

- Eating small, frequent meals and drinking at least 8 glasses of water a day along with taking prenatal vitamins daily is the suggested diet.
- Caffeine and alcohol are okay during a cycle but in moderation. You should try to limit your caffeine intake to 1-2 cups a day; this includes coffee, teas, and sodas. Alcohol consumption should be limited to 2-3 drinks per week.

## Are there any limits to exercise or activity during a cycle?

- Starting around the 5<sup>th</sup> day of stimulation through pregnancy test, you should plan to limit your exercise to low impact activities. Some examples of low impact activities are: leisurely walking, swimming, and biking.
- Avoid heavy lifting of 20 lbs. or more, high impact activities, and hot tubs.

## **What are the time parameters on when we can have intercourse?**

- The sperm collection for the cycle and any analysis should be within 2 to 5 days from last ejaculation. On your IVF cycle calendar, day 8 is usually a good day to have intercourse and then abstain until the sperm collection at egg retrieval.
- Avoid intercourse if vaginal bleeding occurs during pregnancy.

## **Can I travel during a cycle?**

- It is expected that you will be available any day of your cycle once stimulation medications begin. You should not plan any travel during your stimulation cycle.
- Once the embryo transfer occurs, travel is not restricted until late in pregnancy, i.e. after 32 weeks of gestation or otherwise indicated by your SRM physician in the first trimester or your regular obstetrician after 12 weeks of gestation.

## **Can I have a Flu shot during a cycle?**

- Yes! Any theoretical risk or concern about the flu shot is far outweighed by getting the flu itself.

## **Miscellaneous**

- Avoid handling cat feces, such as changing a litter box.
- Do not take any medication unless they are approved by your physician.