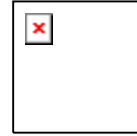


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UNIVERSITY
OF ABERDEEN



***Routine blood tests
offered before the
storage of sperm,
eggs and embryos***

Information for patients

**Aberdeen Fertility Centre
Aberdeen Maternity Hospital**

Why do I need these tests?

As part of your care, we offer you several blood tests. These tests can all usually be done from one blood sample that we obtain when you attend the clinic before starting your treatment. This leaflet gives some information on these routine tests.

The Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority ask that these blood tests be carried out to reduce the risk of cross infection during the storage of semen, eggs or embryos. All the tests will be carried out unless you instruct otherwise.

Please take time to read this information and note any questions you have. When you attend the clinic you can discuss these with the nurse or doctor.

These blood tests are confidential and only healthcare professionals closely involved in your care will be told of your results. Positive results for hepatitis B and hepatitis C are automatically given to Community Health who will contact your GP.

What infections do you test for?

Hepatitis B and hepatitis C

Both hepatitis B and C infect the liver. They can remain in the blood for many years before causing signs of illness. Without a test, you may not know if you are infected. If the test is positive, specialist help can be provided for you.

HIV

The Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) is the virus that causes AIDS (Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome).

Infection with HIV is less common than hepatitis B or C. HIV attacks the immune system and destroys the body's defences against infection and disease. It can take years for HIV to do enough damage for someone to become ill and many will not know that they are infected unless they have a test. If your result is positive for HIV, you can be referred for specialist help and treatment.

How can these infections be spread?

The main ways these infections can be transmitted are:

- Through unprotected sex with a man or woman (sexual risk low for hepatitis C).
- If you've received unscreened blood or blood products (all blood in the UK is now screened).
- From mother to child (risk low for hepatitis C).
- Sharing needles or other drug injecting equipment that contain traces of blood.
- Having an inoculation of another person's blood (such as needlestick injury or body piercing from contaminated equipment).

If you are concerned or wish to discuss any of these issues before your next appointment, please contact a member of the clinic nursing staff.

When do I get my results?

We will tell you the results of these routine tests at your next clinic visit. If any problem is found, or if there is something you should know, we will contact you as soon as possible before your next visit.

From time to time we may need to ask for another blood sample because of technical problems.

Will I still be able to get life insurance?

Having a test in itself has no implications for current or future life insurance policies. However, any positive result may need to be declared on insurance health questionnaires and could have important insurance implications. You may wish to check your own policy for further details.

What if I don't want to have these tests?

We know that this is a lot to take in and you can postpone having these tests if you want more time to think things over. **However, we need to do these tests before we can store your eggs, semen or embryos.**

What information is kept about these tests?

When agreeing to have the blood test you should be aware that:

- We keep a record of any test results as they may be needed in the future. This information will include a number of personal details such as your name, address and date of birth.
- All healthcare professionals have a legal duty to keep patients' personal information confidential.
- Information gathered from these blood tests may be used for research or audit in order to improve our knowledge about these infections, and also to improve our service. For research that requires personal information, your consent would be sought beforehand.
- All information that is collected is stored in accordance with the Data Protection Act.

If you would like to know more about the information being kept please ask the doctor in charge of your care.

If you have any questions or if you are concerned about any of these tests, please ask at your next clinic visit or contact the nursing staff at any time.

This leaflet is also available in large print and on computer disk.

Other formats and languages can be supplied on request. Please call Quality Development on (01224) 554149 for a copy. Ask for leaflet 0105.

Feedback from former patients helped us to develop this leaflet. If you have any comments or suggestions about how we can improve this leaflet, please let us know.

Aberdeen Fertility Centre
Aberdeen Maternity Hospital
Leaflet supplied by:

revised January 2006
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Quality Development, Foresterhill