
CLOMIPHENE CITRATE (Clomid[®], Serophene[®])

Clomiphene citrate is a medication that enables many women to ovulate by improving and coordinating the pituitary gland signals that cause a follicle (the fluid filled sac that surrounds the egg) to mature and prepares the egg for release. Clomiphene Citrate is given to women whose pituitary gland is able to function but needs to be regulated in order to work. It is also used to improve the quality and timing of ovulation in women who already ovulate. Lastly, it may improve the preparation of the endometrium (lining of the uterus) and facilitate implantation.

Your doctor has prescribed Clomiphene Citrate as part of your fertility treatment. This handout will help you understand the treatment, its effects, risks and benefits.

Length of Treatment:

Clomiphene Citrate is taken each month until you become pregnant or your doctor determines that another treatment is preferable. Most women take Clomiphene Citrate for 3 – 6 months.

Taking Clomiphene Citrate:

When your menstrual period begins, you should notify our office to schedule your Clomiphene Citrate cycle. Our phone hours are Monday – Friday, 9 A.M. until 4 P.M.. Should your menstrual cycle begin over the weekend, please contact our office on Monday morning. You will be asked to come in to the office on the second or third day of your menstrual cycle to check the level of FSH and estradiol hormones in your blood.

You will begin taking the medication on the 2nd, 3rd, 4th, or 5th day of your menstrual cycle and continue the medication for five days. The dosage of Clomiphene Citrate taken daily varies from woman to woman, depending on her hormonal conditions and prior responses to the medication.

You may have a baseline sonogram prior to taking the first Clomiphene Citrate tablet each cycle. This sonogram is done to view the ovaries and observe for cysts. If present, ovarian cysts may affect the response to Clomiphene Citrate.

A second sonogram, the mid-cycle sonogram, will be performed 4 – 6 days after taking the last Clomiphene Citrate tablet. Blood will also be drawn to measure your estrogen level. You will be instructed exactly which day to return to the office for this sonogram. Conversely, your physician may have you use an ovulation predictor test kit starting the third day after taking the last Clomiphene Citrate tablet. The ovulation predictor kit shows a color change to indicate impending ovulation. The mid-cycle sonogram will be scheduled once you have detected the color change. This sonogram provides

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information about the growth of the follicles, and determines the timing of ovulation. Sometimes, an injection of the medication hCG (human chorionic gonadotropin; Profasi[®], Pregnyl[®], Novarel[®]) is given. An injection of hCG will cause the final maturation and release of the eggs from the follicles. Please use the ovulation predictor kit in the morning and contact the office on the day you detect the color change. On weekends, you will not be able to call the office directly, therefore you should test for a surge early on Saturday morning and if positive arrive at the office between 8:00 A.M. and 8:30 A.M. If your kit is positive on Sunday morning, please arrive at the office Monday morning between 7:30 A.M. and 9:30 A.M.

Ovulation is expected 5 – 8 days after the last Clomiphene Citrate tablet is taken. You should begin having sexual relations two days after you have taken the last Clomiphene Citrate tablet. If you are to have an insemination procedure, the timing will be determined based on when the injection of hCG is administered.

Approximately one week following ovulation (or one week following the hCG injection), a blood test will be performed. Blood is drawn on Monday – Saturday from 7:30 A.M. until 9:30 A.M. This blood test measures the level of progesterone in your blood and helps confirm that ovulation occurred. Based on this test, your doctor may either prescribe progesterone supplementation or alter the dosage of Clomiphene Citrate in a subsequent cycle.

Side Effects:

Infrequently, women may have hot flushes, decreased cervical mucus, and headaches while on Clomiphene Citrate. This is because Clomiphene Citrate antagonizes the effects of estrogen, the hormone responsible for increasing cervical mucus. Rarely, women may experience visual disturbances while on Clomiphene Citrate. If you have blurred vision or see flashing lights, discontinue the Clomiphene Citrate and contact our office.

Approximately 5% of women develop benign ovarian cysts while on Clomiphene Citrate. These cysts are rarely significant, but may cause bloating and lower abdominal pain. If you develop these symptoms, you should inform the office. These symptoms usually occur one week after taking the last Clomiphene Citrate tablet and may continue for one to two weeks.

Within one month after cessation of the treatment, any side effects from Clomiphene Citrate should disappear.

Lastly, multiple gestations occur in approximately 8% of patients who conceive while on Clomiphene Citrate. The overwhelming majority of these pregnancies are twin gestations.

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