



INTRAUTERINE INSEMINATION (IUI)

Intrauterine insemination (IUI) is a process by which washed sperm are placed through the cervical canal and released inside the uterus. This insemination technique allows for the placement of the most motile sperm closer to where the egg will be following ovulation. The liquid in which the sperm swim (seminal fluid) is extremely irritating to the uterus, so the sperm must be washed prior to the insemination.

Processing of the sperm is done in the Andrology Laboratory of Columbia Hospital for Women. The laboratory is located in the office of Columbia Fertility Associates. The semen sample is collected by masturbation. A private room in the laboratory is provided for collecting of the specimen or it may be collected at home. If the semen sample is to be collected at home, our office will provide a sterile specimen cup. The sample should be kept at room temperature, and arrive at the laboratory within one hour of collection. The laboratory technician will process the specimen, removing the seminal fluid, and concentrating the most motile sperm in a small volume of culture media. This preparation takes approximately two hours to complete. Our office will schedule specific appointments for each partner. In general, the male will be scheduled to collect the specimen between 7:30 AM and 8:30 AM. The female partner will then be scheduled approximately two hours later. Following preparation, the specimen is kept in a temperature-controlled incubator and will remain viable for several hours.

The physician performs the actual insemination. Prior to the insemination procedure, the nurse and/or physician will review the specimen report with you and answer any questions you may have about the procedure. The washed sperm are placed into a syringe that has a soft, flexible thin catheter attached. A speculum is inserted into the vagina and the cervix is visualized. The physician passes the catheter through the cervical canal into the uterine cavity. The sperm are then slowly injected into the uterine cavity.

During the insemination procedure there may be some cramping. You may take aspirin, Tylenol[®], Motrin[®], Advil[®], or Alleve[®] one hour prior to the procedure. Following the insemination there may be some spotting. You may wear a panty liner to protect your clothing. Although rare, infection of the uterus or tubes may occur as a result of dislodging bacteria from the cervix. The symptoms of an infection include fever (temperature greater than 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit), excessive bleeding, or severe pain. If any of these symptoms occur, please contact the office immediately.

Indications for IUI include the following:

- Cervical factor – scanty or absent cervical mucus or an anatomical defect
- Sperm factor – low or low-normal sperm count, motility, volume, or morphology
- Sexual dysfunction
- Idiopathic or unexplained infertility
- The use of frozen or donor sperm

Intrauterine insemination (IUI) may be performed in conjunction with ovarian stimulation using fertility medications such as clomiphene citrate (Clomid[®], Serophene[®]) or menopausal gonadotropins (Fertinex[®], Follistim[®], Gonal F[®], Humegon[®], Pergonal[®], Repronex[®]). Your physician will determine the timing and number of inseminations per cycle.

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