

# FAQ

## IVF NEXT FERTILITY IVF Prof. Zech Pilsen

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## Before the first visit

### Why should I choose your clinic?

We have a tradition of more than 20 years and thousands of satisfied customers from the Czech Republic and many other countries. We offer first-class treatment that is comparable in price or more advantageous than in other European clinics. We treat each patient individually and with respect. Our patients have a permanent attending physician for the entire duration of the treatment.

We have no hidden fees. The price of the therapy is determined individually according to the medical history, diagnosis, needs and requirements of the couple to be treated during the initial consultation.

We have a long history of achieving high success rates, making us one of the world's leading infertility treatment clinics.

We have no waiting times for initial consultations or treatments. You can start immediately if you wish.

Our clinic has the world's most modern equipment and techniques.

Our experienced staff and doctors are fluent in German and English.

We support you in completing all formalities. On request, we will also be happy to help you organize the journey and accommodation.

We offer you a free initial consultation with a doctor by phone or Skype.

We offer genetic and immunological tests that go a long way in uncovering the cause of infertility and speeding up treatment.

### Do I need a doctor's referral for my first visit to your clinic?

A doctor's recommendation for the first consultation in our clinic is not mandatory. If you have already undergone examinations or treatments elsewhere, it is recommended that you bring these medical reports with you. We recommend a visit to our assisted reproduction clinic to all couples who are trying to conceive for more than a year without success, or directly if fertility problems are detected.

### When is it appropriate to undergo IVF?

IVF as such is indicated when other, especially conservative, methods of infertility treatment are ineffective or the probability of successful treatment with other methods is very low.

### Is IVF treatment covered by insurance?

Since our IVF center does not have contracts with foreign insurance companies (only Czech ones), all treatments are covered. You must negotiate with your health insurance company yourself whether the treatment costs will be covered.

### What is the success rate of infertility treatment at Next Fertility IVF Prof. Zech Pilsen?

In the long term, we have achieved a high success rate (over 55% per embryo transfer, cumulatively up to 75%), which makes us one of the world's leading assisted reproduction centers. The success of IVF is strongly influenced by the age of the patients and the laboratory methods used. Our doctors will advise you individually and personally on which laboratory methods are best suited for you and plan the treatment process according to your needs.

### How long does IVF therapy take?

The duration of the entire IVF process depends on the results of previous examinations and the method of treatment. The minimum duration of the entire treatment is 2-3 weeks. At Next Fertility Clinic, a

cycle with your own eggs, including the complete preparation of the couple, usually lasts one to two months.

### What does the term IVF mean?

In vitro fertilization, or IVF for short, also known as test-tube fertilization or artificial insemination, is a reproductive technique in which one or more eggs are fertilized with sperm outside the body and the resulting embryos are then reinserted into the uterus. IVF can use the treated couple's own eggs and sperm, or, if necessary, donated eggs or sperm.

## Causes of infertility

### What are the causes of female infertility?

Female fertility is most influenced by age. From the age of 30, fertility decreases steadily. From the age of 35, this process progresses significantly.

In addition to general factors such as stress, lack of sleep, obesity or malnutrition, smoking, alcohol or drug use, there are also health causes that lead to infertility:

Ovarian factor – ovarian dysfunction (e.g., anovulation, premature ovarian failure, etc.)

Fallopian tube factor – blocked, dysfunctional or missing fallopian tubes

Endometriosis – the appearance of cells of the endometrium outside the uterine cavity

Immunological factor – the body produces antibodies against sperm, eggs or embryos

Genetic cause – often it doesn't necessarily have to be infertility, but artificial insemination minimizes the risk of having a child with a birth defect.

Other conditions or their treatment that negatively affect a woman's fertility.

### What are the causes of male infertility?

Male fertility is negatively affected by several factors.

These include smoking, the consumption of soft and hard drugs, increased temperature in the genital area (tight clothing, any other artificial heating in the genital area) or stress. Furthermore, we distinguish between pretesticular, testicular and post-testicular causes.

Pre-testicular causes – insufficient development of the male gonads (testicles)

Testicular causes – poor quality ejaculate that contains a very small amount of sperm

Post-testicular causes – blocked vas deferens, inflammation of the prostate.

In some cases, a man's fertility can also be negatively affected genetically.

### What supplements should be used during treatment?

The right micronutrients that the body needs and a healthy diet in general play an important role not only during conception, but also during pregnancy. Since it is often difficult to ensure optimal levels through diet, your doctor will discuss this issue with you and may recommend products that are available over the counter at a pharmacy.

Sufficient folic acid is not only associated with a higher chance of pregnancy, but it is also used during pregnancy to reduce the risk of neural tube defects in the fetus and promote the proper development of its cardiovascular system.

**Probiotics.** These beneficial bacteria are responsible for many metabolic processes that affect fertility. By supporting healthy digestion, they ensure the absorption of important vitamins and minerals, regulate the hormone levels necessary for pregnancy and protect the expectant mother from possible infections and inflammations.

**Vitamin D.** It is commonly known as the "sunshine vitamin," which helps our bodies absorb calcium for bone health. However, vitamin D also plays a role in cell growth, muscle function and immunity. Healthy vitamin D levels support conception and pregnancy and are therefore recommended as a supplement during the IVF process.

### How is male infertility studied?

The basic examination of male fertility is a spermiogram, which determines the number and quality of sperm in the ejaculate. A normal semen analysis result is confirmed if the ejaculate meets the following conditions:

At least 15 million sperm/ml

At least 40% of sperm are motile

Total ejaculate volume of at least 1.5 ml

### What are polycystic ovaries?

PCOS – Polycystic ovary syndrome is one of the most common causes of female infertility, affecting up to 10% of women. Symptoms of this disease include irregular or absent periods, weight gain, or increased facial and body hair. Polycystic ovary syndrome means that no eggs are released from the ovaries (anovulation) and therefore fertilization cannot take place.

### What is endometriosis and how many women are affected by it?

Endometriosis is one of the most common gynecological diseases of women of childbearing age, affecting up to 10% of women. It is usually a painful condition in which the cells of the lining of the uterus (endometrium) are located outside the uterus. During menstruation, these cells also bleed, which leads to inflammation. The manifestation of the disease is, first of all, more painful menstruation, pain in the lower abdomen or blood in the urine. Endometriosis is a very common cause of female infertility.

## Artificial insemination

### Why does getting pregnant with IVF sometimes fail?

There are many factors that influence the success of IVF – egg quality, sperm quality, endometrium, genetic predisposition and others. Unfortunately, it is often not possible to determine exactly why the pregnancy did not occur. However, we can suggest treatment procedures that will increase the chances of getting pregnant the next time you have IVF attempts.

### Can an ectopic pregnancy occur during IVF?

As with a natural pregnancy, this risk also exists after IVF (2% after IVF, 1% for a natural pregnancy). The risk is higher in women with damaged fallopian tubes (e.g. after inflammation). However, we can detect an ectopic pregnancy with a follow-up ultrasound.

### Can the likelihood of a hereditary disease be reduced?

Preimplantation genetic diagnosis (PGT) is used to minimize the risk of certain hereditary diseases. During the PGT test, several trophoblast cells from the embryo are biopsied (removed), which are

then analyzed in our genetic laboratory of the subsidiary Genetika Plzen. During this test, the embryo is not damaged in any way and continues its natural development or is frozen for cryoembryo transfer.

### Can IVF be performed without fallopian tubes or ovaries?

If a woman does not have fallopian tubes, IVF is the solution for her, where her own eggs can also be used. Without ovaries, a woman can undergo IVF treatment using only donated eggs.

### When should I take a pregnancy test after IVF?

A urine pregnancy test is not conclusive until the 12th day after embryo transfer at the earliest. If the test is negative, we recommend repeating the test on the 14th and 16th day after the embryo transfer or checking the result by examining the level of HCG from the blood. After a positive test, please make an appointment for an ultrasound examination to rule out an ectopic pregnancy.

### When is it appropriate to repeat IVF?

The length of the break between IVF attempts/cycles depends on the type of treatment and the intensity of hormonal stimulation. We usually recommend a break of 1 to 3 months.

### Is it advisable to do PGD/PGS before IVF therapy?

PGD/PGS tests are now collectively referred to as PGT – preimplantation genetic diagnosis. The PGT test is particularly suitable in cases where one parent has a genetic condition. It is also suitable in situations where the woman has had several miscarriages. PGT analysis can significantly reduce the risk of miscarriage in the first trimester of pregnancy while detecting some genetic diseases. However, it is not a substitute for prenatal screening for congenital malformations.

### How many embryos are used?

The number of embryos per transfer does not affect the success of assisted reproduction. The chances of getting pregnant can be increased by repeated transfers. Therefore, we recommend that only one embryo be transferred in each transfer. We can freeze the remaining embryos in order to transfer them in a later cycle (after a pregnancy has not occurred or as a chance of having a sibling).

### Is IVF therapy painful?

During IVF stimulation, there may be side effects reminiscent of menstrual pain. The egg retrieval itself takes place under general anesthesia and is therefore painless. Patients who undergo treatment with donor eggs are not stimulated with hormonal preparations, do not undergo single-cell removal and therefore do not have any pain.

### What is the procedure for embryo transfer?

After embryo transfer, we recommend avoiding physically demanding activities, sexual intercourse (at least one week) and stressful situations. It is not necessary to be unable to work.

### What is the difference between IVF therapy and IUI?

Both IVF and IUI are methods of assisted reproduction. IUI (or insemination) Intrauterine insemination is a reproductive technique in which purified sperm are introduced into the uterus via a catheter. Thus, the chances of fertilization are higher than with natural sexual intercourse. IVF is a method of "artificial insemination" in which the egg and sperm are fused outside the woman's body. The embryo is then transferred to the uterine cavity. IVF can be performed with both your own and donated eggs.

### What is the difference between IVF therapy and ICSI?

IVF is a method of artificial insemination in which the fusion of eggs and sperm takes place in the laboratory of the IVF center without the use of micromanipulation techniques. The prerequisite for this is very good sperm quality and the absence of an immunological cause for infertility. The ICSI method consists of introducing (injecting) sperm into the egg using a micromanipulation technique. It generally increases the success rate of fertilization, especially in the case of poorer quality of the ejaculate, a lower number of eggs or the immunological cause of infertility. Nowadays, the ICSI technique has completely replaced the IVF method.

### What requirements do I have to meet for IVF therapy?

Due to the laws in force in the Czech Republic, fertility treatments can be carried out on heterosexual couples. The age of the woman must be between 18 and 49 years - the age of the man is not decisive. It is necessary that both (woman and man) register with the clinic in person. The couple does not have to be legally married or present any other notarial acts.

### What are the risks associated with artificial insemination?

The health risks associated with IVF are minimal. One of the rare complications of hormone treatment is overstimulation (OOHS). It can lead to an enlargement of the ovaries, fluid accumulation in the abdominal cavity, or the risk of developing other more serious organ complications. However, current reproductive medicine can greatly reduce the risk of such a situation. With appropriate treatment, the symptoms of OHSS usually resolve spontaneously within a few days of egg retrieval.

Pregnancy after artificial insemination is otherwise no different from pregnancy after natural conception. Therefore, it is associated with the same risks and complications as premature birth, miscarriage, preeclampsia, etc.

### What is the success rate of IVF therapy after the age of 40?

Female fertility declines from the age of 30 and decreases even faster from the age of 35. For women over 40 years of age, the chances of getting pregnant and giving birth to a healthy baby are already very low. To maximize the chances, we recommend that women over the age of 40 use donor eggs. If you would like to undergo treatment with your own eggs, we recommend that you start IVF treatment as soon as possible, as even a delay of a few months can have a significant impact on its success. Our doctors can also recommend appropriate laboratory tests and micromanipulation methods that increase the success of the treatment.

### What is the ideal height of the endometrium?

We consider the ideal mucosal height to be 8-12 mm. Although we use adequate doses of hormones and other complementary medications, many women do not reach this level. Nevertheless, they have a high chance of getting pregnant. Even a mucous membrane with a height of 7 mm offers a high probability of embryos implanting.

### How to increase IVF success rate?

Our doctors will assess your situation individually and recommend further steps, dietary supplements, appropriate laboratory tests or micromanipulation methods that will increase the success of your personal treatment.

### How are ovarian stimulation medications administered before IVF therapy?

Stimulants are usually injected into the skin below the belly button with a thin needle. Other supportive medications are used in various forms (oral, vaginal, transdermal, or rectal) in the form of tablets, suppositories, gels, or sprays.

### How do I know which day is the first day of my cycle?

This is the first day of menstrual bleeding. If you start bleeding after 6 p.m., count the following day as the first day.

### How does age affect fertility?

Age is very crucial for a woman's fertility. A woman's fertility begins to decline from the age of 30, and after the age of 35, the decline in fertility accelerates significantly. One of the main reasons for this is the decreasing quality of the eggs. Your doctor will talk to you about the different options for fertility treatment to choose the most promising treatment together.

### How long does it take to retrieve the eggs and how long do I have to stay in the clinic afterwards?

Egg retrieval takes place in our clinic under short-term general anesthesia or analgetics and usually takes 10-15 minutes. After collection, you will be discharged from the clinic within 2 hours. It is necessary to be accompanied, as you are not allowed to drive a car after general anesthesia, for example.

### Will I get a sick note for an IVF procedure?

Fertility treatments are not automatically a reason for inability to work. We recommend sick leave only for women with physically demanding professions or for women who do not feel well during stimulation or after egg retrieval.

### Is IVF therapy performed without hormonal stimulation?

Yes, IVF can be done with minimal hormonal stimulation or cycle regulation. This is the so-called native cycle, in which only one egg is retrieved, the one that is just maturing naturally in the ovary. However, the success rate of the native cycle is usually much lower.

## Law

### Do you also offer artificial insemination for single women and same-sex couples?

According to current Czech legislation, treatment in IVF clinics is only possible for couples of different sexes.

### Do I have to be married to my partner if we want to undergo artificial insemination?

It is not necessary to be married for artificial insemination. However, the written consent of both partners (woman and man) is required by law. This also applies to the treatment of infertility with donated eggs or donated sperm.

### What is the age limit for the IVF method?

IVF treatment can be carried out up to the age of 49 years of age, the age of a man is not limited by law. We recommend that you do not postpone the treatment under any circumstances, as age is a very important factor for the success of artificial insemination.



### Can you determine the sex of a baby before IVF?

Under current law, it is only possible to determine the sex of the embryo before embryo transfer if one parent is a carrier of a serious genetic disorder associated with a sex.

## IVF with donor eggs

### What criteria are used to select the donor and what information can I find out about her?

Donors are selected based on age, state of health, personal and family history, as well as the results of mandatory examinations and tests. The decision to assign a donor to a recipient pair is based on phenotypic characteristics (height, weight, eye and hair color) and blood type. Donation in the Czech Republic is anonymous and subject to legal confidentiality, strictly respecting the anonymity of the donors and the identity of the recipients and the descendants of the donors. We provide recipients with information about the year of birth, blood type, eye color, hair color, height, weight, and education of the donor.

### Is the donor's blood type important?

Blood group and Rh factor are not important parameters for the success of treatment. The donor does not have to have the same blood type as the recipient and does not have to share the same blood type with the child's partner/husband or father. Women with a negative Rh factor are screened for antibody levels during pregnancy and later. Immunoglobulin is used preventively.

### Is it good that the donors are anonymous?

In our opinion, yes. This is evidenced by the experience of countries where donor anonymity has been abolished. These countries (e.g. the UK) are facing a shortage of egg donors and sperm donors. Since egg and sperm donation in the Czech Republic are mutually anonymous, i.e. the recipients are also anonymous to the donor, it cannot happen that the biological mother or father, i.e. the egg donor, later asserts claims against your future child. According to the current laws of the Czech Republic, a child conceived from donated eggs or sperm does not have the right to know the identity of the biological parent or parents, even after reaching the age of 18.

### What is the average age of donors?

The donors of our clinic are usually between 20 and 30 years old. According to the laws of the Czech Republic, healthy women between the ages of 18 and 35 can donate their eggs.

### What are the obligatory examinations of donors?

Each donor undergoes a comprehensive examination, which includes at least the following:

- Assessment of general health
- Gynecological examination
- Find out personal and family history
- Genetic tests from donor blood
- Interview with a geneticist
- Examination for sexually transmitted diseases.

Our donors will undergo the above test and, if necessary, other optional examinations to ensure the best quality of treatment for the recipient couple.

### How long does it take to select a suitable donor? What are the waiting times?

Since we have enough suitable donors in our center, we can carry out the treatment with practically no waiting time. Embryos suitable for embryo transfer are usually available within 1-2 months.

## Egg donation

### Does it matter if I use contraception? Do I have to stop using contraceptives? What if I have an IUD?

The intrauterine device is not an obstacle to egg donation even in a person treated with medication, it certainly does not stretch, and its function is not affected in any way. Hormonal contraceptives should be discontinued for one month.

### Doesn't anyone know that I donated eggs?

In accordance with Act No. 373/2011 Coll. on Specific Health Services, egg donation in the Czech Republic is completely anonymous and our clinic is obliged to ensure mutual anonymity. This means that the donor has no information about which infertile couple her eggs have helped, and the recipient does not know who used the donated eggs for artificial insemination. This anonymity is retained even after the child born of artificial insemination has reached the age of 18.