

**Patient
Information**

Body Mass Index (BMI) and fertility

Introduction

This leaflet outlines the risks and possible complications linked to obesity and the benefits of losing weight. You may find this information useful as you have recently been given advice about how life style changes and weight loss will help to improve your fertility.

Problems and risks linked with obesity

- Irregular periods
- Increased risk of infertility
- Increased risk during fertility surgery
- Reduced success with fertility treatments

Pregnancy complications with obesity

- High blood pressure during pregnancy
- Diabetes in pregnancy
- Birth defects
- High birth weight baby
- Caesarean section

Benefits of weight loss

- Weight loss can improve ovulation and pregnancy rates.
- It can improve your overall health.
- It helps improve self-esteem and wellbeing.

Fertility centres strict policy for admitting women for treatment

- If your BMI is more than 30 and less than 35, it is advised that you lose weight. You should aim to reach a BMI of 29.5 to be eligible for NHS fertility treatment.
- If your BMI is more than 35, then treatment cannot be offered unless the above criteria is fulfilled.

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Department

Gynaecology

Review due

December 2026

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Contact information

If you have any questions, please contact the fertility nurses through Mrs K Reddy's secretary on the number below.

Cotswold Fertility Unit

Tel: 0300 422 3128

Monday to Friday, 8:00am to 4:00pm

Website: www.cotswoldfertilityunit.co.uk

Further information

For more information about fertility treatment please visit:

Human Fertilisation Embryology Authority

Website: www.hfea.gov.uk

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Making a choice

Shared Decision Making

If you are asked to make a choice, you may have lots of questions that you want to ask. You may also want to talk over your options with your family or friends. It can help to write a list of the questions you want answered and take it to your appointment.



Ask 3 Questions

To begin with, try to make sure you get the answers to three key questions if you are asked to make a choice about your healthcare.

1. What are my options?
2. What are the pros and cons of each option for me?
3. How do I get support to help me make a decision that is right for me?

These resources have been adapted with kind permission from the MAGIC Programme, supported by the Health Foundation

* Ask 3 Questions is based on Shepherd HL, et al. Three questions that patients can ask to improve the quality of information physicians give about treatment options: A cross-over trial. Patient Education and Counselling, 2011;84: 379-85



<https://aqua.nhs.uk/resources/shared-decision-making-case-studies/>