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IN VITRO FERTILISATION (IVF)

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In Vitro Fertilisation is more commonly known as the 'test tube baby' technique. It requires the removal of eggs from the female partner's ovaries. These are then fertilised in the laboratory with a prepared semen sample. Once fertilisation has been confirmed, a maximum of two embryos are then transferred to the uterus (womb) one or two days later. The treatment requires a course of medication and, hopefully, one or both embryos will result in pregnancy.

IVF is used if the fallopian tubes are damaged or for unexplained or male causes of infertility.

In order to prepare for egg collection, the female partner must undergo a course of daily injections and regular ultrasound scanning. Most of the medication is taken by subcutaneous injection. Essentially there are two phases to ovarian stimulation. A control phase prevents natural ovulation, so that the egg collection can be accurately timed. The stimulation phase is given on a daily basis by injections. The course of stimulation will, hopefully, result in the ovaries producing eight to twelve follicles. You will have regular ultrasound examination at this time to assess the number and size of the follicles. Once this has been achieved, an egg collection can be planned.