Overview

In order to increase your chance of pregnancy, we will prescribe a Follicle Stimulating Hormone (FSH) medication to increase the number of mature eggs (oocytes) that you produce in one month. In a natural cycle, your body typically will only produce one mature egg. Or treatment intends to induce 3-4 mature eggs which will increased your chances for conception. We will monitor you closely with blood tests and ultrasounds to ensure proper oocyte development, and also make certain that you are not over- or under-stimulated. Once your oocytes are mature, we will prescribe a second medication, Human Chorionic Gonadotropin (HCG), that induces ovulation. Thirty-six hours after your HCG administration, an intrauterine insemination (IUI) is performed. An insemination will increase the number of sperm in the vicinity of the oocyte at the exact time of ovulation.

Medications Utilized

Follicle Stimulating Hormone (FSH)

Follicle stimulating hormone (FSH) is classified as gonadotropins with brand names Gonal-F®, Follistim®, Bravelle®, Menopur®. These are administered by injection and stimulates the recruitment and development of the ovarian follicles which contain the oocytes. FSH is naturally produced by the pituitary gland upon stimulation by gonadotropin releasing hormone, which is produced by the hypothalamus.

The dosage of FSH is highly dependent upon each patient’s response and may change during the stimulation cycle. Dosage is influenced by follicular size and number which are monitored by ultrasound. Estrogen increases in proportion to the number and size of follicles. Its measurement helps determine the optimal dosage for each patient. Dosage and response must be monitored by a reproductive specialist to minimize the chance of adverse effects, such as hyperstimulation, and insure adequate follicular development.

Human Chorionic Gonadotropin (HCG)

Ovulation occurs 36 hours after administration of HCG so this is when insemination is scheduled. HCG Pregnyl® or Profasi® mimics Luteinizing Hormone (LH) and induces ovulation after the administration of gonadotropins. Ovidrel® is derived from genetic recombinant technology and, due to its purity, can be administered subcutaneously.
Process

Step 1: Call 713-465-1211 during regular business hours following Day One of your cycle. Day One is defined as the first day of menstrual flow (that requires use of a pad or tampon) before 5:00 pm.

Step 2: A vaginal sonogram and blood test will be scheduled on day 3 of your cycle. This sonogram is performed to make certain that you do not have any large cysts on your ovaries that would prevent ovarian response to gonadotropins. Blood tests for Estradiol and/or FSH are utilized for medication dose adjustments. Assuming these tests are within normal limits, medications are started that evening. Remember to take your medication at approximately the same time each day.

Step 3: Return for blood tests after 2-4 days of FSH administration. Sonogram will be scheduled as determined by your Estradiol levels. You can expect between 3-5 sonograms with gonadotropin cycle.

Step 4: Once your oocytes are mature (15-20 mm in average diameter), HCG is administered to induce ovulation. This injection is usually given between 9 and 11pm. Abstain from sexual intercourse 2-5 days prior to insemination.

Step 5: Insemination will be scheduled 36 hours after you HCG injection. Partners may collect sperm at home or on-site. If sperm is collected at home, the sperm must be delivered within one hour of collection. A consent form and picture ID must accompany the specimen when the collection is performed off-site. The insemination will take approximately 15 minutes. All patients should refrain from products containing ibuprofen for three days prior to insemination. Intercourse the night of the insemination and the following night is encouraged.

Step 6: A pregnancy test is performed 14 days after insemination. You may perform a urine pregnancy test at home or a blood test at Houston IVF.

Side Effects/Complications

You'll also have a 10-15% chance of conceiving twins with these fertility drugs. Higher order pregnancies (triplets or higher) can rarely occur.

Gonal-F® and Ovidrel® are registered trademarks of EMD Serono, Inc.
Follistim®, HCG Pregnyl® and Profasi® are registered trademarks of Merck & Company, Inc.
Bravelle® and Menopur® are registered trademarks of Ferring Pharmaceuticals, Inc.