

Fertility Plus COVID-19 FAQs

31st March 2020

What does NZ moving to Alert Level 4 mean for current treatment cycles?

- All egg collections due for the week of 23rd March 2020 have now been completed. All egg collections week of 23rd March were freeze all's. Frozen embryo transfers will be scheduled when we start treatments again.
- Egg collections that were scheduled for week of 30th March 2020 onwards have been postponed.
- All inseminations and embryo transfers from Wednesday 25th March have been postponed.

Book Ons

- At this stage we are not accepting new treatment cycles/Day 1's for any type of treatment

For people who have started a treatment cycle:

- If your cycle has been postponed please stop your drugs and keep your drugs in the fridge for your future cycle.
- You can then phone in with your Day 1, when we restart cycles. Our team will stay in touch during Alert Level 4.
- For all FET's, IUI's, and DI's we will also let you know when you can ring in with your Day 1. The team will keep in touch with you during this time.

Will postponing affect my public funding?

- No, you will still be eligible for your public funding.

What if I was paying privately for treatment that has been postponed?

- We will refund your treatment cycle cost for your postponed cycle.
- We will waive the usual cancellation costs and booking on fees.
- If you had a freeze all last week due to COVID-19, the cost of your first embryo transfer will be waived.

What about doctor consultations?

- Our doctors will do all follow ups, reviews and consultations by phone call or video conferencing. The doctor will ring you around the time you were scheduled to come into clinic.

What about Orientations?

- We will continue all Orientations that were already scheduled. These will all be done by phone. The doctor will call you around your scheduled time, they will talk you through the consent form and then you can sign it when you have your injection teach appointment.
- You will also get a phone call from a nurse and an embryologist on the same day.
- Your planned treatment month will be changing. Once we have rebooked your treatment when the Alert Level goes down we will be in contact to let you know which month to ring with your period and which month your treatment will be.

What about nursing and other support?

- Our nursing team will still be available to support you through treatment, although many will be working from home with access to your medical records online.
- We will be able to answer your questions and get advice from our doctors throughout this time.
- Please contact the nurses on FertilityNurse@adhb.govt.nz
- If you have clinical questions please phone Debs on 021 893 354 or Christine the Charge Nurse on 022 129 8199

What about support from our Social Workers?

- Fiona and Hope are available to support you through this unsettling time. They are both here for you so please contact them if you need to talk to someone.
- Fiona and Hope can be contacted on 021 578 917

How do I change or book a consultation or review appointment

- Please ring our reception desk on 09 630 9810 or 021 226 3085

What about pregnancy scans and antenatal care?

- These are essential services that will continue
- Our nursing team will continue to stay in contact with you with these arrangements.

What are the implications for patients who had to freeze all their embryos?

- Survival rates of frozen embryos are at least 95% in a modern IVF laboratory
- Birth rates from thawed embryos are very similar to those from fresh embryos
- The freeze-all approach is already routine for patient's who respond briskly to IVF medications or have increased levels of the progesterone by the time of egg collection, being 30-40% of all patients

What about my frozen embryos, eggs and sperm?

- During this period there is a roster in the embryology team to go into the clinic and continue doing the usual checking and measuring of the liquid nitrogen tanks where embryos, eggs and sperm are stored.
- BOC will continue to deliver liquid nitrogen weekly to ensure the tanks are always topped up.

How do I contact an Embryologist?

- Phone Jeanette the Scientific Director on 021 560 383 or email on jmackenzie2@adhb.govt.nz

What are the risks in pregnancy if I contract corona virus?

- At this time, pregnant women do not appear to be more severely unwell if they develop COVID-19 infection than the general population. Majority of women are expected to have mild or moderate flu like symptoms.
- There is no evidence to suggest an increased risk of miscarriage.
- Some babies born to women with symptoms of COVID-19 have been born prematurely. It is unclear whether the virus is the causative factor, or the doctors made the decision for the baby to be born early because the woman was unwell. Newborn babies and infants do not appear to be at increased risk of complications from the infection.

Please remember to stay at home unless it's for essential medical care or grocery shopping. Keep in contact with our team as everyone is still working hard behind the scenes for you.

We will let you know when treatments can start again and which month you can call with your Day 1 for your cycle.

If you need any additional support Fertility NZ are available on 0800 333 306 or support@fertilitynz.org.nz