



**The Shrewsbury and
Telford Hospital**
NHS Trust

Patient Information

The Shropshire and Mid Wales

Fertility Centre

Endometrial Scratching

Shropshire and Mid Wales Fertility Centre

Address: Severn Fields Health Village, Sundorne Road,
Shrewsbury SY1 4RQ.

Tel: 01743 261202 / 01743 261199

Introduction

These notes give a guide to your visit to the fertility centre, steps you need to take in advance of your appointment and what it may be like afterwards. They may not cover everything and, as you are an individual you may wish to know more. If this is the case, please ask a member of staff.

Implantation is the word used to describe the embryo attaching to the lining of the uterus (womb) and is an essential step in the development of a pregnancy. Recurrent implantation failure (RIF) is defined as the repeated transfer of a healthy looking embryo to a healthy uterus without achieving successful implantation and pregnancy.

The unit is able to offer women with recurrent implantation failure the option of Endometrial Scratching, a procedure where a thin tube, called a catheter, is passed through the cervix (the opening to the uterus) to gently scratch the lining. We only offer this on a frozen transfer cycle, not a fresh IVF/ICSI cycle or an IUI cycle.

It is important to understand that it is not clear whether endometrial scratching is effective in increasing your chances of having a baby through treatment. Some studies have found it to be effective and some have not.. For further information on endometrial scratching including its effectiveness please refer to the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority (HFEA) website.

<https://www.hfea.gov.uk/treatments/treatment-add-ons/endometrial-scratching/>

www.shropshireivf.nhs.uk/fertility-treatments-and-investigations/addons/

Benefits, Risks and Alternatives

Benefits

Some studies have shown higher implantation, pregnancy and most importantly live birth rates following endometrial scratching, particularly in women who have previously had four or more unsuccessful cycles. However, it should be noted that our governing body, the HFEA, rate this procedure as 'Amber' for increasing the likelihood of having a baby for most fertility patients undergoing IVF/ICSI treatments. This is because they do not believe there is clear evidence of endometrial scratching improving the outcome of treatment..

The HFEA have also rated endometrial scratching as "Grey" for increasing the chances of having a baby for patients with recurrent implantation failure. This means they do not have enough good quality evidence available to be able to rate this differently. More information can be found on their website using the link above.

Risks

There is a small risk that if you have an infection within your cervix before this procedure, this may cause the infection to spread up into the uterus. If this occurs it can be treated.

There is a very small risk that your uterus could be perforated during the procedure. If this happens then admission to hospital is likely to be required.

Alternatives

The procedure is optional and you can choose whether to have it or not. If you choose not to have it you can still have your embryo/s transferred in a normal treatment cycle.

Preparation for Procedure

When is it done?

Endometrial scratching can be done at any time during the menstrual cycle before your treatment cycle.

You should avoid trying to get pregnant in the menstrual cycle in which endometrial scratching is performed. Use barrier contraception or abstain from intercourse from the day your period starts.

If your periods are infrequent you may be prescribed the contraceptive pill to induce a period-like bleed. If this is the case, you should take a pregnancy test before you start taking this medication to confirm that you are not pregnant.

Patients must not wear any perfume, deodorant, make up or hair products to the scratch appointment.

What happens when you arrive for your appointment?

How is it carried out?

Endometrial scratching is a simple procedure similar to an embryo transfer.

A medical instrument called a speculum will be used to find the cervix, which is then cleaned with a saline solution. A small catheter is then passed through the cervix into the uterus and suction applied. The aim is to remove/scratch some of the endometrium (lining of the womb). The speculum is then removed and you can get dressed and go home when you are ready.

Is it a painful procedure?

Endometrial scratching may cause mild abdominal cramping similar to period pain. If required, you can take paracetamol for pain relief. Some mild bleeding is not unusual after the procedure, so you need to bring a sanitary towel to use after the procedure.

Consent

We ask for your consent prior to the procedure. You can withdraw or vary this consent at any point if you change your mind. Patients funding their own procedure should bear in mind that a cancellation fee may be payable if the procedure is cancelled at short notice.

Personal Data and Confidentiality

You will be asked to sign a "consent to disclosure" form early on in your treatment pathway so that we can share your information with other professionals when it is necessary. We follow guidelines set by the Shrewsbury and Telford Hospital Trust and by our regulators, The Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority to ensure we keep your personal information secure.

Counselling

A specialist fertility counsellor is employed by Shropshire and Mid Wales Fertility Centre. Please let our staff know if you think you need an appointment. Please be aware there may be a cost for this service if you are funding your own treatment.

Cost

If you are having a treatment cycle funded by the NHS then the procedure will also be covered by the NHS. If you are funding your own treatment either on the self-funded or Access pathway the cost is £265, this is payable to the fertility unit either before or on the day of your appointment.

Contact details for more information

Useful telephone numbers

Fertility nursing team **01743 261202** or call the hospital switchboard on **01743 261000** and ask to be put through to the Fertility unit. Please note the department accepts calls from 9am to 5pm Monday to Friday.

Further information is available from;

Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)

We act on your behalf when handling patient and family concerns, liaising with staff, managers and where appropriate, relevant organisations to negotiate immediate or prompt solutions. We can also help you get support from other local or national agencies.

Royal Shrewsbury Hospital, Tel: 0800 783 0057 or 01743 261691

Princess Royal Hospital, Tel: 01952 282888

Other Sources of Information

NHS 111

A fast and easy way to get the right help, whatever the time. NHS 111 is available 24 hours a day, 365 days of the year.

Telephone: 111 (free from a landline or mobile)

Website: www.nhs.uk

Patient UK

Provides leaflets on health and disease translated into 11 other languages as well as links to national support/self-help groups and a directory of UK health websites.

Website: www.patient.info

Self Help & Support Groups

A selection of websites providing access to good quality patient and consumer health information, covering specific age groups and conditions.

Also includes Shropshire Community Directory which contains up-to-date information on community groups, clubs, societies, organisations, support groups and self-help

groups covering Shropshire and its borders.

Website: www.library.sath.nhs.uk/find/patients/

Special Needs Information

Please contact the Fertility Unit to discuss.

Website: www.sath.nhs.uk

www.shropshireivf.nhs.uk

Information Produced by: The Shropshire and Mid Wales Fertility Centre

Date of Publication: 30/06/2025

Due for Review on: 30/06/2026

Document Number A197C Version 10

© SaTH NHS Trust