

# Fertility treatments at Vitanova



Vitanova

FERTILITY CLINIC | COPENHAGEN

Part of CREATE Fertility™

IVF Guide

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[www.vitanova.dk/en](http://www.vitanova.dk/en)



This booklet is intended as a helpful guide through IVF treatment at Vitanova, what to expect at each stage and your options when it comes to choosing fertility treatment.

We know this can be an emotional time for you and we want to make the process as simple as possible. With this material, we hope to be able to give you answers to some of the questions and speculations that are probably occupying you at the moment. We try to give every single woman optimal treatment and care in the process.

If you decide that IVF is right for you, rest assured that our team will be there every step of the way with you.



It is our fundamental obligation to ensure that we protect the long term health of women and babies so that we can look back and say that we have done absolutely the right thing. We make fertility treatment available to all, including single women, heterosexual and same-sex couples.

We have responsibility for the future, not just the present.

**Geeta Nargund**  
Medical Director

# Why Choose Vitanova?

We provide women-friendly treatment that delivers better health outcomes for mothers and babies. Our pioneering approach focuses on the quality of eggs, not egg quantity. By offering insemination as a first treatment option to women with open tubes and good fertility, we are reducing any unnecessary risks. Our vision is to promote gentler fertility treatment which offers women the best chance of success and reduces the emotional, physical and financial burden associated with IVF.



We believe in giving every woman a chance to become a mother.

Our approach to fertility treatment is one based on a wealth of scientific knowledge and expertise, coupled with excellent patient-centred care. We provide the best treatment for you, using minimal medication to reduce side effects and long-term risks.



Unrivaled access to donors



Part of CREATE Fertility, Europe's leading Mild & Natural IVF experts



Focused on the health of the woman and baby



Led by pioneers & medical experts



Higher quality eggs and embryos



Excellent success rates



Safer for women and healthier for babies



Excellent treatment journey and care

# Patient Journey



## Scan and test

We recommend that you do a scan to check you AFC and/or the AMH blood test in order to assess your ovarian egg reserve. This provides us with important information about your fertility and we can give you better cancelling.



## Book your virtual consultation

Book your virtual consultation with one of our multilingual medical team either online or by calling us. You will receive a confirmation email with all the details of your booking including a link to a form you are required to fill out and your virtual consultation if you have chosen video or phone number if you have chosen to call. Please make sure you save this link ready for your consultation.



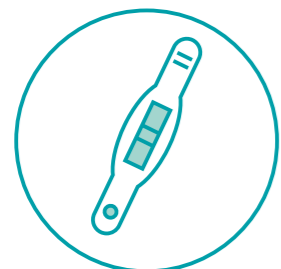
## Medical review

As a first step, you will talk with one of our specialists to review your fertility and discuss the best course of treatment. This consultation can take place over video/phone with one of our multilingual medical team who will assess any results, tests or scans previously undertaken



## Treatment plan

We will outline your personalised treatment plan, costs, and next steps. If you are a single woman or same-sex couple residing in a country where fertility treatment in your circumstances is not permitted, we can help advise you on how to arrange scans/tests locally. We have a trusted pharmacy partner that can deliver most treatment medication to you at home.



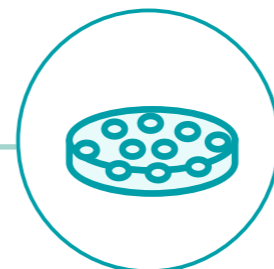
## Pregnancy test

You can perform a urine pregnancy at home 14 days after transfer. If it is positive then you need to visit your doctor for a confirmation test. We recommend a pregnancy scan three weeks after a positive test (the eighth week of pregnancy), with your local clinic, and we ask you to let us know the results.



## Embryo transfer

We fertilise eggs in our lab and monitor them carefully, transferring embryos a few days later. The procedure is quick and pain free, and feels similar a smear test. Although this is an emotional time, we recommend you return home and try to carry on all your usual activities after the transfer: the eggs cannot come out of the uterus.



## Egg collection

This procedure is carried out in our Copenhagen clinic and takes around 15-20 minutes. Our specialist will collect your eggs through the vagina using a fine catheter. You will be awake but lightly sedated with painkillers and local anaesthetic. Some women find the procedure painless, other feel slight discomfort. You should rest for the remainder of the day (and we recommend you do not drive). There maybe some mild back or abdominal pain after the procedure.



## Starting treatment

You will contact us on day 1 of your cycle and we will give you the specific plan telling you to take the medication and when to do your scans.



# What is Mild IVF?

Mild IVF is a form of stimulated IVF where low doses of hormones are given for a shorter period (5-9 days) in a woman's own natural cycle with an aim to collect between 2-7 eggs. It is aimed at "quality and not quantity" of eggs and embryos. In women who want to avoid taking injections, we are able to offer a tailored Mild IVF cycle using tablets.

## Advantages of Mild IVF

- Mild IVF – like Natural IVF – is carried out within a woman's natural menstrual cycle. Where conventional IVF focuses on collecting a large number of eggs Mild IVF focuses on collecting fewer, better quality eggs.
- By using gentler stimulation and working with the body's natural cycle, rather than against it, we aim to collect eggs of much higher quality.
- The treatment time for Mild IVF is just two weeks and our success rates are excellent.
- Mild IVF has a comparable success rate to conventional IVF, while reducing the side effects, complications and cost of treatment.
- Studies have shown that egg and embryo quality are better in Mild IVF compared with conventional IVF.
- The lining of the womb is more favourable for implantation in Mild IVF. High stimulation drugs and oestrogen levels can adversely affect the chance of implantation and the future health of the baby.
- As with all our approaches, Mild IVF offers a less invasive approach and the lower doses of fertility drugs lead to fewer potential risks and side effects.
- The treatment is carried out within your own natural menstrual cycle and the associated physical and emotional stress is considerably less demanding than a conventional IVF cycle. There are none of the menopausal side-effects associated with a conventional IVF cycle.
- Patients who choose this option can repeat their treatment more often than with conventional IVF.
- The risks of complications, such as Ovarian Hyperstimulation Syndrome (OHSS) are considerably lower.

- Mild IVF is more affordable per cycle than conventional IVF treatment because of reduced doses of stimulating drugs.
- There are a reduced number of injections compared with conventional IVF and there may be a reduced chance of gaining weight.

## Who is Mild IVF suitable for?

- Those with a normal egg reserve
- Those that are having treatment due to a male factor
- Patients with Polycystic Ovaries/Polycystic Ovarian Syndrome (PCOS).
- Those that want to take a lower amount of drugs
- Those that want to reduce the physical and psychological burden associated with conventional IVF
- Mild IVF is suitable for anyone whose success rate is increased with stimulation. This includes those with a normal egg reserve, those that are having treatment due to a male factor, those who have PCO/PCOS.
- Where many clinics would give you conventional IVF, we can offer you Mild IVF.
- Those that want to take a minimal amount of medications in a stimulated cycle.
- Those that want to avoid the risk of Ovarian Hyperstimulation Syndrome.
- Those that want to reduce the physical and psychological burden associated with conventional IVF.
- Those that want the treatment fitted within their own natural menstrual cycle.

## What is Natural/Natural Modified IVF?

Modified Natural Cycle IVF is a form of Natural Cycle IVF. Medication is given for 3–4 days in order to block spontaneous ovulation and a small dose of stimulation hormone is given in order to keep the follicles healthy and growing. Sometimes, Modified Natural Cycle IVF allows us to collect more than one egg from a cycle. In women who want to avoid taking injections, we are able to offer a tailored Modified Natural Cycle using tablets.



### Advantages of Natural/Natural Modified IVF

- Natural Cycle IVF involves egg collection aligned with your natural menstrual cycle; there are no stimulation drugs or injections involved. It works in sync with your menstrual cycle to collect the egg naturally selected by your body.
- Natural Cycle IVF is suitable for every woman who is still ovulating and wants to avoid stimulation IVF drugs or injections.
- We also offer Natural Modified IVF, this is a form of Natural IVF where the treatment is carried out within your natural menstrual cycle but is modified by introducing additional medication aimed at blocking your spontaneous ovulation and supporting the growth of the naturally selected follicle.
- Natural Modified IVF has an improved success rate, compared with pure Natural IVF, while retaining many of the benefits. We are especially proud of our success rates for women with low egg reserve and those in older age groups.
- Modified Natural Cycle IVF has an improved success rate compared with Natural Cycle IVF and retains many of the benefits.
- Egg and embryo quality are considered to be better in Modified Natural Cycle IVF compared with conventional IVF.
- The lining of the womb is more favourable for implantation in Modified Natural Cycle IVF. High stimulation drugs and oestrogen levels in conventional IVF can adversely affect the chance of implantation and the health of the baby.
- As with all our approaches, Modified Natural Cycle IVF offers a less invasive approach and the use of minimal fertility drugs leads to fewer potential risks and side effects.
- The risk of Ovarian Hyperstimulation Syndrome (OHSS) is avoided with Modified Natural Cycle IVF.

- The treatment is carried out within your natural menstrual cycle and the associated physical and emotional stress is considerably less demanding than in conventional IVF.
- There are no menopausal side-effects, which are usually associated with conventional IVF
- Unlike conventional IVF, patients who choose this option can repeat their treatment in consecutive natural cycles.
- Modified Natural Cycle IVF is more affordable per cycle than conventional IVF treatments as it does not require high doses of costly medications.

### Who is Modified Natural Cycle IVF suitable for?

**All women can be helped with IVF treatment in a natural or natural modified cycle, but especially:**

- Women with low ovarian or egg reserve
- Women who have had a poor response to conventional high-stimulation IVF (e.g. produced fewer than three eggs)
- Women who've had previous failure of implantation with conventional high-stimulation IVF or want to avoid the risks and side effects of high stimulation IVF
- Women with low Anti-Müllerian Hormone (AMH) or high Follicle Stimulating Hormone (FSH)
- Women who are older but wish to try with their own eggs, rather than with donor eggs
- Women who suffer from severe endometriosis
- Women who have a history of hormone-dependent cancers
- Modified Natural Cycle IVF is suitable for all women who ovulate.
- It is especially suited for patients with low egg reserve whose blood tests have indicated that they have low levels of Anti-Müllerian Hormone (AMH) or high levels of Follicle Stimulating Hormone (FSH).



# Natural IVF

In Natural Cycle IVF, we collect the one egg that has been naturally selected by your body during your menstrual cycle and fertilise it in the laboratory. This naturally selected egg is likely to be of better quality because it tends to have had the best blood flow during maturation. The resulting embryo is then placed into the uterus. This treatment is carried out without the use of fertility drugs.

## Advantages of Natural Cycle IVF

- Natural Cycle IVF is carried out without the need for stimulating drugs
- Generally, the egg that is selected can be of higher quality than those produced in a stimulated cycle.
- The health and wellbeing of mother and child is our first priority. This IVF treatment offers a less invasive approach and the use of no fertility drugs leads to fewer potential risks and side effects.
- There is no risk of Ovarian Hyperstimulation Syndrome (OHSS).
- The treatment is carried out within your natural menstrual cycle and the associated physical and emotional stress is considerably less demanding.
- Unlike with conventional IVF, patients who choose this option can repeat their treatment in consecutive natural cycles.
- Natural Cycle IVF is more affordable per cycle than stimulated IVF treatments as it does not require daily doses of costly medication.

## Who is Natural Cycle IVF suitable for?

- Natural Cycle IVF is suitable for all women who ovulate.
- Natural Cycle IVF is especially suited for those patients with a low egg reserve, poor responders to stimulation medication and older women.
- It gives the opportunity for some women to have a child with their own eggs rather than donor eggs.
- For those that want to avoid injections or drugs, Natural Cycle IVF is an option.
- For women who have a strong family history of breast, ovarian and other oestrogen dependent cancers.
- It can also benefit women who have severe endometriosis, who may be concerned about the effect of increased oestrogen on their condition.

# Additional services

## Freezing of eggs

With IVF, usually fewer eggs are transferred back, than were taken out. If there is a surplus of suitable, fertilised eggs after treatment, they can be frozen and used in subsequent treatments. The thawed eggs are usually transferred in a natural cycle, and it is therefore less of a burden to you than regular IVF treatment with stimulation.

## ICSI

ICSI, or micro-insemination, can be a solution when infertility is due to the man having reduced sperm quality, or if normal IVF treatment has not resulted in fertilised eggs. It may also be a solution if the man has frozen semen of poor quality or produces antibodies against his own sperm. The actual preliminary treatment, hormone stimulation, is the same as in conventional IVF. With ICSI, an extremely thin glass needle is used to fertilise the eggs by injecting a single sperm into each egg. The eggs are then placed in an incubator, where they will begin to divide. Ideally, they will have divided into 6–8 cells after three days and are ready for embryo transfer.

## TESA (testicular sperm aspiration)

If the man has been sterilised or has blocked sperm ducts for other reasons, we can obtain usable sperm by means of TESA. TESA is an operation under local anaesthetic to extract sperm from the scrotum. After local anaesthetic in the groin just above the scrotum, a thin hypodermic needle goes into the scrotum. The

sperm is in small stings in the scrotum and these are sucked out through the needle. The embryologist then examines the cells for usable sperm, which must mature for 24 hours in the laboratory before they can be used in ICSI. TESA is therefore carried out the day before egg pick-up.

The actual operation takes about 30 minutes, after which you have to stay at the clinic and rest for an hour. You will experience tenderness in the scrotum for a few days after the operation and should take 1–2 days sick leave. You cannot drive immediately after the operation.

## FER (frozen embryo replacement)

When eggs are collected, usually more are taken out than are needed for the first attempt at IVF. Once fertilisation has taken place, the remaining eggs can be frozen for later use. Fertilised eggs are called embryos. Although the method we use to freeze the embryos, vitrification, is very gentle, it is a difficult process and we cannot predict how many of the embryos will be suitable for embryo transfer later. Embryo transfer can be carried out either in your own natural cycle or in a hormone-stimulated cycle, in which we have prepared the mucous membrane of the womb to receive the fertilised egg. In either case, after embryo transfer you must apply a hormone stimulant cream in the vagina. The hormone stimulant prevents you having a menstruation even though you are pregnant.

## Donor sperm

We have a selection of donors kept on-site, at our Copenhagen clinic, that we have purchased from a Danish sperm bank. Alternatively, if you wish to purchase your own donor sperm, we will happily provide any help you may need with that process. We support single women, lesbian couples and heterosexual couples seeking fertility treatment using a sperm donor.



### Open donors

In open donation, children conceived via sperm donation have the option to contact the sperm bank when they turn 18 for information on the identity of the donor. The child's parent cannot make the request.



### Private donors

Private donation for single women can be arranged where the donor is the legal father of your baby, in which case your donor should accompany you to the clinic for your initial appointment to discuss the process. We can also carry out treatment for heterosexual and lesbian couples with a private donor, where the donor will have no legal or financial responsibility for the baby.



### Anonymous donors

In Denmark you have the option to choose sperm donated by a man who prefers to remain anonymous, which means neither the parents nor the clinic has access to identifying information.





## Lifestyle advice

A healthy mind promotes a healthy body, so aim to de-stress and relax. Continue with your interests and give yourself permission to have fun regularly without feeling guilty. Taking part in activities which promote positive thinking can help to relieve your fertility worries.

Improving your health and well-being prior to starting any fertility treatment will boost your natural fertility, minimise stress levels and will get your body ready for treatment.



### MEDICAL:

- It is a medical requirement that patients trying to conceive should be taking 400 micrograms (mcg) of Folic Acid each day.

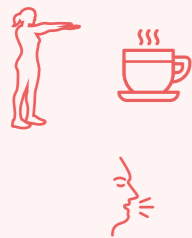


### DIET:

1. Eat fruit and vegetables, and foods which are good sources of protein
2. Reduced saturated fat and sugar intake
3. Top up your Omega-3 levels
4. Vitamin supplements (particularly vitamin D) may help to give extra support
5. Drink plenty of fluids

### LIFESTYLE:

1. Stop smoking
2. Avoid alcohol
3. Reduce your caffeine intake
4. Getting a good night's sleep
5. If your BMI is above or below average, we advise for our patients to aim to get to a healthy weight



### DE-STRESS TIPS:

1. Doing light exercise
2. Taking regular breaks
3. Walks in the outdoors
4. Deep breathing exercises
5. Arrange treats for yourself

## Our commitment to you

We hope that this guide has helped to answer lots of the questions that you have about your treatment. We want you to feel as comfortable and as confident about your journey as possible. Our team are happy to answer your questions and to reassure you along the way. We are here to support you throughout your treatment with us, and we promise to work with your body all the way through your time with us.

We wish you every luck with your treatment.

Professor Geeta Nargund  
Medical Director - Vitanova





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