Fertility center

azdelta

Dear prospective parent,

Do you want to become pregnant, but it doesn't seem to be happening naturally?
Come and visit the AZ Delta fertility centre. Either by making an appointment yourself or after referral by your gynaecologist.

This brochure introduces you to our fertility centre and the team behind it.
The various treatments, possible tests and a healthy lifestyle are discussed briefly.

Every situation is different and every couple deserves a personal approach.
You can always contact the fertility consultant to schedule an appointment or if you have any questions and/or concerns.

At the fertility centre, we believe in a personal approach.
Together with the entire team, we want to provide high-quality support during the course of your fertility treatment.
We will do whatever we can to help you fulfil your wish to have children.

AZ Delta Fertility team

1. Overview of treatments

Depending on your case, how long you have wanted to have children and the results of the relevant tests, it is decided in consultation with the fertility doctor which treatment is most suitable.

Ovulation induction

In case of ovulation induction, the cycle is monitored by follicle measurements (ultrasound) and blood sampling. The aim is to find the fertile period so that intercourse can take place at the right time. This can be either in a natural or a stimulated cycle. If you have an irregular cycle, you may need to start taking medicines in the form of pills or injections.

Inseminations

Intrauterine insemination is a form of treatment which involves processed sperm cells from the man being inserted high in the woman's uterus around the time of ovulation. The (natural or stimulated) cycle of the woman is followed beforehand by follicle measurements and blood sampling. Insemination occurs on the day of ovulation. The man's sperm is brought into the fertility centre in the morning. It is then prepared and processed in the lab. This process is called 'capacitation'. During this process, the most active sperm cells are selected and the harmful components removed from the semen. The same day around noon, the woman is expected at the fertility centre for the insemination. The capacitated sperm is injected through a fine catheter that passes through the cervix into the uterus.

IVF/ICSI

IVF/ICSI will be proposed as a treatment if the chances of a natural conception process are non-existent or significantly reduced. IVF/ICSI involves fertilisation of the egg in the lab. In the case of IVF, several sperm cells will be added around the egg and the intention is for 1 sperm to enter the egg. In the case of ICSI, one sperm cell is selected and the lab technician injects the sperm directly into the egg.

Before this treatment can be started, various tests and interviews will be scheduled so that you are sufficiently informed about the course of events. Your cycle is stimulated by injections to obtain multiple follicles containing an egg. Once all the results are positive, a puncture is performed to pick up the eggs. On the same day, a fresh sperm sample is required from your partner. The eggs and sperm go to UZ Ghent together where fertilisation (IVF/ICSI) takes place. For the transfer of an embryo that may have been obtained, you will have to go to UZ Gent once per cycle.

The major steps in the treatment are:

- stimulation of the ovaries to develop multiple mature eggs - AZ Delta
- puncture of the follicles and aspiration of the egg cells (follicular puncture) - AZ Delta
- processing of the sperm sample - AZ Delta
- fertilisation of the egg cells in the lab (IVF or ICSI) - ARG UZ Gent
- fertilisation monitoring - ARG UZ Gent
- embryo culture - ARG UZ Gent
- embryo transfer - ARG UZ Gent
- freezing the embryos - ARG UZ Gent

Thawing frozen embryos

If one or more embryos of good quality remain after the embryo transfer, they can be stored in liquid nitrogen. Thawed embryos can be transferred in a natural cycle if it is regular or after the uterine lining is prepared by means of hormones.

Treatment with donor material

At our centre, it is not possible to start treatment with donor material. For these procedures, we cooperate with UZ Gent. Contact the fertility centre for further contact details. However, all necessary tests or examinations can be carried out at our centre if you prefer it.

2. Sperm cell analyses

In addition to the tests to be performed on the woman, a sperm analysis of the man can be scheduled at the doctor's request. **This is always done by appointment.** The available times are:

submitting sample at Rumbeke campus
- Monday and Thursday morning at 7:30 a.m.
- every weekday except on Wednesdays between 1:00 and 2:00 p.m.
- delivery at fertility centre

submitting sample at Menen campus
- Monday and Thursday morning at 7:30 a.m.
- every weekday except on Wednesdays at 12:30 p.m.
- delivery at blood collection service

submitting sample at Torhout campus
- Monday and Thursday morning at 7:30 a.m.
- every weekday except on Wednesdays at 12:00 noon
- delivery at blood collection service

submitting sample at Tielt campus
- Monday and Thursday morning at 8 a.m.
- every weekday except on Wednesdays at 12:30 p.m.
- delivery at blood collection service

To arrange the appointment, contact the fertility centre. All contact details can be found on the back of this brochure. Results are known after approximately 1 week. You can contact your gynaecologist for this.

It is important that the sample is collected and transported in a standardised manner. For this, use the sterile container made available by the fertility centre or your gynaecologist. Open the container by turning the white lid. The numbered sticker that is torn when you open the container must be kept on the container.

Please observe the following collection and transportation instructions.

1. Sexual abstinence for two to seven days before producing the sperm sample is desirable (minimum 48 hours and no more than seven days).
2. Urinate before you produce the sperm sample.
3. Wash the penis with water.
4. Stimulate the production of the sperm sample by masturbation and capture all of it in the sterile container. Under no circumstances may a different method (e.g. condom) be used. Ensure that both the beginning and end of the sample are properly collected.
5. If the sample was not completely collected, report this to the person receiving the sperm sample. This is important for the interpretation of the results.
6. Close the container tightly and keep it at body temperature (37°C, by keeping the container in contact with the body: under your armpit, under your arm, in your pocket, etc.) until it is submitted to the lab.
7. Submit the sperm sample with the forms you received from your doctor within 1 hour of the sample being produced.

3. Importance of a healthy lifestyle

In general, a healthy lifestyle has a positive impact on fertility treatment.

Healthy weight

If you wish to become pregnant, you are advised to aim for a healthy weight. A BMI between 18.5 and 25 is an ideal weight. However, a normal BMI does not say everything: someone who is overweight and eats healthily can have a healthier weight than someone who misses meals to achieve the ideal BMI. Try to maintain the ideal weight through a healthy, balanced diet and exercise. So focus primarily on your own ideal, healthy weight and less on your ideal BMI. If there is a need for guidance from a dietitian, you can ask the fertility doctor or consultant for advice.

Smoking

It is well known that smoking during pregnancy is harmful to the child, both in the short and in the long term. However, many people do not know that smoking also has a major impact on fertility. In women, this results in lower-quality eggs, impaired reproductive system function, delayed conception and early menopause. In men, this has a negative effect on the quantity and quality of the sperm, causes damage to the sperm DNA and erection problems.

Smoking therefore results in a lower chance of a successful treatment and makes more treatments necessary. Smoking also involves a higher risk of miscarriage and ectopic pregnancy.

It is therefore highly recommended to stop smoking before starting fertility treatment. If desired, you can be referred to the tobaccologist who can assist you to stop smoking. Feel free to ask the fertility doctor or consultant for more information.

Alcohol and drugs

Alcohol is increasingly considered 'socially acceptable' but it is better avoided as it affects fertility and poses significant risks to the foetus during pregnancy. Reducing or even stopping drinking completely is recommended for future mothers, especially during pregnancy and breastfeeding. Future fathers must also reduce or stop their alcohol before conception.

Drug use in any form whatsoever is strongly discouraged, especially during fertility treatment and pregnancy.

Mental well-being

Fertility treatment does not only affect you quite a lot physically. Attention must also be paid to mental well-being. This is not only about emotion and feelings, but also about connection with other people and the world around us.
In any case, mental well-being is dynamic. All kinds of experiences and events will influence this, in a positive and negative way. Keeping the balance will be difficult at different times. Everyone processes their emotions in their own way, but it's important not to withdraw yourself too much when processing it all. Therefore, please continue to communicate with your partner and any family and/or friends. Don't hesitate to get professional help if you need it. An appointment with the psychologist of our fertility centre can be made very easily. You will find the contact details at the end of this brochure.
Because of the rollercoaster of examinations, treatments... you may sometimes feel that there is little time left for yourself. Remember to schedule some me-time every now and then to clear your head. These can be simple things: walking, exercising, reading a book ...

Toxoplasmosis

Toxoplasmosis is an infectious disease caused by a parasite: Toxoplasma gondii. Toxoplasmosis is also commonly called the "cat disease" because cats are the only animals that carry the adult form of the microbe in their intestinal lining. It is spread into the soil through their faeces and then spreads further from there.

Toxoplasmosis can cause harm to the unborn child in pregnant women during the first few months after infection. That is why it is important to take this into account during fertility treatment. You can do this by avoiding raw meat and thoroughly washing fruits and vegetables. In addition, it is best to wear gloves while gardening. Have someone else clean the litter box or wear disposable gloves.
Your gynaecologist or fertility counsellor will let you know whether or not you are immune to toxoplasmosis. If not, you must make sure you do not get infected.

Cytomegalovirus (CMV)

Cytomegalovirus (CMV) is a common virus found in body fluids such as saliva, urine, tears, etc. An infection with CMV is usually harmless and may cause symptoms such as fever, fatigue and sore throat.
Most people experience few consequences, but for pregnant women, this does pose risks. For the unborn child, who does not yet have a developed immune system, an infection with CMV during or just before pregnancy can have serious consequences. CMV is considered one of the main causes of non-hereditary deafness and mental disabilities.

To prevent infection, it is important to avoid contact with these body fluids. This can be done mainly by practising good hand hygiene, especially after a nappy change or when cleaning the nose. In addition, it is best to avoid kissing
on the mouth, and don't use the same cutlery.

During your fertility treatment, blood samples will be taken regularly to test whether you have a CMV infection. After all, it is important not to become pregnant during the acute phase of the infection.

4. Presentation of the fertility team

Fertility doctors
- Dr Veerle Dewulf
- Dr Danielle Vandenweghe
- Dr Elvira Serkei
- Dr Sofie Neutens

Andrologists
- Dr Xavier-Philippe Aers
- Dr Francis Duyck
- Dr Katrien Spincemaille
- Dr Jan Van den Saffele

Clinical Biologists
- Inge De Cuyper
- Hilde Vanpoucke

Quality coordinator / head midwife
- Kimberly Ver Eecke

Fertility consultants
- Anne-Marie Breyne
- Evi Delarue
- Tine Desodt
- Anneleen Jongbloet

Fertility lab technicians
- Ineke Debruyne
- Freya Houthoofd
- Annelies Ver Eecke
- Aylien Vanraepenbusch

Psychologist
- Joke Corneillie

Notes

Contact

Fertility Consultant
t 051 23 63 82
e fertiliteit@azdelta.be

Available on weekdays from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.
Saturday from 9:00 to 11:00 a.m.

Psychologist Joke Corneillie
t 051 23 38 80
e joke.corneillie@azdelta.be

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