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for every body



Fertility Testing

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The headline of the Observer Sunday 9th August 2009 expressed the opinion of Professor Bill Ledger of Sheffield University that all women should undergo fertility testing at the age of 30. Apparently couples are “sticking their heads in the sand” with regard to fertility and assuming that their ability to have babies will not change as they progress into their late 30s or early 40s.

The article suggests the use of blood tests and ultrasound but also expresses its doubts that the NHS will happily fund this.

The use of a blood test looking for Anti-Müllerian Hormone (AMH) is useful because it is produced under the instructions of the AMH gene. This compound can be used to measure “ovarian reserve”. The number of eggs provided to the ovaries is thought to develop when the woman herself was an embryo in her mother’s uterus. No more eggs are made through a lifetime and therefore a woman providing an egg for fertility at the age of 25 is using a 25-year-old cell and a woman at 40 is providing a cell aged 40. The older a cell the more chance there is of it malfunctioning. In other words AMH gives a prediction of ovarian age, risk of dysfunction and therefore potential for fertility.

This conventional approach for investigation has been offered by The Diagnostic Clinic over the last six years. However, TDC also considers the nutritional status of individuals (men with regard to their sperm as much as women and their eggs/ovaries) as being arguably equally as important. A fertility check can therefore be divided into different levels.

1. Anti-Müllerian Hormone Assessment
2. Anti-Müllerian Hormone Assessment and Nutritional Urinalysis using the ONE (Optimal Nutritional Evaluation) Profile.
3. For those who are experiencing difficulty in becoming pregnant not only do we do the AMH and ONE analysis but we also strongly recommend Functional Ovarian Ultrasonography. This is done by a specialist centre associated with the Diagnostic Clinic using an advanced technique of ultrasound which is not commonly found through the NHS or conventional screening laboratories. Ultrasound is principally concerned with structural analysis but advanced techniques can now indicate whether an ovary (or other tissues) is actually functioning regardless of their anatomical status.

Please feel free to contact The Diagnostic Clinic if you would like to undergo any of these investigations or if you have a specific infertility problem you might choose to book an appointment with one of our Integrated Physicians.

Dr R Sharma

The Diagnostic Clinic Medical Director

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