

Many fertility clinics now offer additional treatment and tests alongside routine IVF, for example, time-lapse imaging, endometrial scratch or EmbryoGlue. These are sometimes included in the cost of treatment, but they are more likely to involve an additional charge. Some additional treatments or tests can cost hundreds or thousands of pounds each.

Fertility Network UK put together a list of questions below to consider before having additional treatments, or add-ons, with the fertility regulator the HFEA (Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority).

Whether you are having fertility treatment through the NHS or are self-funding, it is important to make sure you have the information you need about any additional treatment, why this has been recommended to you and how much you will be charged for it.

For some treatment add-ons there is not enough evidence to show that they are effective at improving the chances of having a baby for most fertility patients. You can find more information about the evidence for the different add-ons on the HFEA website - <https://www.hfea.gov.uk/treatments/treatment-add-ons/>

Key questions to ask your clinic about treatment add-ons

- Why are you recommending this add-on for me specifically?
- Can you tell me what my chances are of getting pregnant with routine IVF compared to my chances if I have this add-on?
- Do you believe the add-on is safe?
- What is the additional cost of the add-on and what is included?
- Will it be more effective if I spend my money on subsequent rounds of routine IVF (if necessary) rather than use this add-on?
- Can costs change during my treatment? If so, will these be discussed with me before any decisions are made?
- Will you, or anyone employed by this clinic, benefit financially from me having this add-on?
- Where can I go for more information and who do I contact if I have further questions?

If you are paying for any aspect of your treatment, then that means you are also a consumer which gives you certain rights. For example, you should be able to compare prices across clinics and then, before you start treatment, the clinic should provide you with full and clear information about the cost to you. You may feel awkward about it, but it is ok to

question your clinic about the cost of your treatment, if for example, you are not clear about some of the treatments or charges.

Detailed questions to ask your clinic about treatment add-ons

It may not be necessary for you to ask your clinic every question. You may find the answers to some of these question in the HFEA'S information about treatment add-ons.

Evidence and suitability

- How does this add-on work?
- Is there good quality evidence to back this up?
- Are there any associated risks or side effects from having this add-on?
- What are the chances of getting results from add-on tests that aren't accurate? Could that lead to more testing?
- Will having the add-on delay my treatment?
- Will I have to make extra visits to the clinic if I have this add-on?
- What if I don't have the add-on?
- Would there be different options if I were treated on the NHS rather than privately?
- Can I or you change my treatment plan part way through? If so, can we discuss those options before I start treatment?

Cost

- Will my itemised bill break down the cost of the individual treatments I will receive?
- Do you charge the same for this add-on as other clinics?
- What is the cost of two cycles with no add-ons vs one cycle with this add-on?
- If I remove this add-on from the package of treatments recommended, will this affect the cost?
- If I have questions about what I am being charged for, can I discuss these with a healthcare professional before making a payment?
- What are the refund and cancellation policies at this clinic, and can I have a copy?
- What are the time limits associated with this package of treatment?

Questions to ask yourself

- Have I read the information on the HFEA website for the add-on I am considering?
- Am I assured that it is safe, and do I know about any possible risks?
- Am I aware of how much difference, if any, this add-on might make to the outcome of treatment?
- Would paying for this add-on affect my chances of being able to afford another routine IVF cycle if I need it?
- Have I been given an itemised bill by the clinic?
- Am I happy with the cost?