

# Ovarian Hyperstimulation Syndrome (OHSS)

Ovarian Hyperstimulation Syndrome (OHSS) is a potentially serious condition that can occur in some women undergoing fertility treatment with Follicle Stimulating Hormone (FSH) injections, particularly when triggered with HCG. OHSS results from the ovaries producing a high number of follicles, leading to ovarian enlargement and increased hormone levels.

The aim of FSH treatment during IVF is to collect 10–15 eggs while avoiding overstimulation. However, OHSS may still occur, especially in women who produce 18 or more follicles or have 18 or more eggs collected during egg retrieval (Ovum Pick-Up, or OPU).

## Who is at Risk?

You may be at increased risk of OHSS if:

- ◆ You have 18 or more follicles on ultrasound
- ◆ 18 or more eggs are collected during OPU
- ◆ You have a stronger than average response to ovarian stimulation

Even women with fewer than 18 follicles can occasionally develop OHSS.

## Symptoms of OHSS

Symptoms range from mild to severe. Common symptoms include:

- ◆ Abdominal bloating
- ◆ Mild to moderate abdominal pain or discomfort
- ◆ Nausea and/or vomiting
- ◆ Mild fluid-related weight gain
- ◆ Decreased urine output
- ◆ Shortness of breath

You may also experience pain lasting more than 48 hours after OPU or a rare complication called ovarian torsion (twisting of an enlarged ovary).

## What to Expect After Egg Retrieval

If you've had a GnRH trigger, your period will likely begin 5–7 days after your egg retrieval, which should bring quick resolution of hormone-related symptoms.

If you have collected a higher-than-average number of eggs, you may feel more symptomatic than usual — this is normal and expected.

## Nurse Monitoring and Support

If you're identified as being at risk of OHSS, a nurse will:

- ◆ Call you daily (Monday to Saturday) to assess your symptoms
- ◆ Support you through the recovery process
- ◆ Escalate to your Fertility Specialist or recommend emergency review if symptoms worsen

Monitoring will continue until symptoms resolve. It's important to return your nurse's call, even if you're feeling better.

If at any time you have concerns or your symptoms worsen, contact your nursing team immediately.

## When to Seek Further Help

Seek urgent medical advice if you experience:

- ◆ Significant or sudden weight gain
- ◆ Difficulty breathing
- ◆ Mild to moderate abdominal pain
- ◆ Very low urine output
- ◆ Signs of dehydration

## If out of office hours, bring this document and present to Emergency:

- ◆ Royal Women's Emergency
- ◆ Epworth Hospital Emergency
- ◆ Local Emergency Department

## Contact Information

If you're concerned or unsure about your symptoms, please call your nursing team directly.

