

This fact sheet provides an overview of the counselling, support and other resources available at Life Fertility Clinic to help manage the stress of infertility diagnosis and treatment.

THE FACTS ABOUT:

Counselling and support services

Infertility counselling and support: when and where to find it

Infertility is a medical condition that touches all aspects of your life. It may affect your relationships with others, your perspective on life and how you feel about yourself.

How you deal with these feelings will depend on your personality and life experiences. Most people can benefit from the support of family, friends, medical caregivers and professional counsellors. When considering infertility treatment options it may be especially helpful to gain the assistance of an infertility counsellor.

The following information could help you decide if you need to seek professional help in managing the emotional stresses associated with infertility, or need assistance in decisions regarding your treatment options.

When do I need to see an infertility counsellor?

Consider counselling if you are feeling depressed, anxious, or so preoccupied with your infertility that you feel it is hard to enjoy life. You may also want to consider counselling if you are feeling "stuck" and need to sort out your options and alternatives.

Signs that you might benefit from counselling include:

- persistent feelings of sadness, guilt, or worthlessness
- social isolation
- loss of interest in usual activities and relationships
- depression
- agitation and anxiety
- increased mood swings
- constant preoccupation with infertility
- marital discord
- difficulty concentrating and remembering

- increased use of alcohol or drugs
- a change in appetite, weight or sleep patterns
- thoughts about suicide or death
- difficulty with scheduled intercourse

Where can I get support?

Support can come from many different areas. Books can offer information and understanding about the emotional aspects of infertility. Support groups and meetings can reduce the feeling of isolation and provide an opportunity to learn from others who are experiencing infertility.

Individual and couples counselling offers the chance to talk with an experienced professional who will help you sort out your feelings, identify coping mechanisms and help you choose solutions to your problems. Discussions with family members and friends are also options.

Your fertility specialist

Your fertility specialist, who is familiar with the nature of your infertility, is the best qualified person to explain to you the problems associated with infertility diagnosis and treatment.

Your Life Fertility Clinic Nurse Coordinator

Life Fertility Clinic Nurse Coordinators are available to discuss any issues experienced as a result of treatment. They are available by appointment or by phoning Life Fertility Clinic. This service may be particularly important if you have had an unsuccessful treatment cycle, or if you become pregnant but suffer the disappointment of a loss. At Life Fertility Clinic support is also available to all patients not just those undergoing a treatment cycle – sometimes it's important just to keep in touch.



The Life Fertility Clinic library

Life Fertility Clinic maintains a library for you to use and borrowing can be arranged. The Life Fertility Clinic library has information on various aspects of infertility and its treatment. Please visit our clinic anytime during opening hours to view our collection of titles.

Life Fertility Clinic associated psychologists and counsellors

Assistance in coping with stress, grief, loss and anxiety is commonly sought by couples and individuals through a psychologist or counsellor.

You're in good hands

Life Fertility Clinic counsellors all have expertise in reproductive counselling which is an essential element in the running of our fertility practice. Life Fertility Clinic encourages all patients having fertility treatment to take advantage of our counselling service.

Counselling is free of charge (one session per IVF cycle) and can be used up to four months after an IVF cycle is completed, however it is not compulsory. Counselling is compulsory for all sperm, egg and embryo donors, their partners and the recipients prior to any treatment. The cost of these counselling sessions is met by the recipients.

Other resources – Health and Wellness program

The Health and Wellness program at Life Fertility Clinic is a resource offered to patients to complement their comprehensive medical care. The aim is to help patients deal with the physical and emotional challenges that infertility and its treatment can present to care for the whole person as well as the fertility. Resources include: complementary yoga classes, diet and exercise advice, complementary massage.

Contact Life Fertility Clinic

The friendly and professional team at Life Fertility Clinic are happy to answer any other questions you may have about counselling and support services.