

Some women are more likely to develop OHSS, especially those with polycystic ovaries, those who are thin and those who responded with many follicles or experienced OHSS in the past.

At KKIVF, we may advise you to abandon the cycle before the HCG injection if your risks of OHSS are high or unexpected rigorous response is encountered in your cycle.

If you are undergoing the IVF/ ICSI programmes, your eggs may be collected but you may not have fresh embryo transfer. The resulting good quality embryos will be frozen for later use.

#### Contact us

Please do not hesitate to contact us if you are feeling unwell. You may be asked to come to the hospital and be assessed by a doctor.

**KKIVF Hotline** **6394-1694**  
**(Monday to Friday 8.30am to 5.00pm,**  
**Saturday 8.30am to 12.00pm)**  
**Urgent O&G Centre** **6394-1190/1197**

#### Useful telephone number

Central Appointments 6294-4050



KK Women's and  
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100 Bukit Timah Road  
Singapore 229899  
Tel: 6-CALL KKH (6-2255 554)  
Fax: 6293-7933

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KK Women's and  
Children's Hospital  
SingHealth

# Ovarian Hyperstimulation Syndrome (OHSS)

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## What is OHSS?

Ovarian hyperstimulation syndrome (OHSS) is a potentially serious complication of in-vitro fertilisation (IVF) treatment.

The medication (gonadotrophin), used to stimulate your ovaries during IVF or associated procedures for fertility treatment, are designed to ensure that a reasonable number of eggs are obtained to maximise your chances of pregnancy.

OHSS happens when too many ovarian follicles have developed in response to the usual dose of medication. It is a result of the hormones produced by the ovaries in response to the drugs given.

Over stimulated ovaries enlarge and release chemicals into the bloodstream that make blood vessels leak fluid into the body. Fluid leaks into your abdomen and in severe cases, into the space around the heart and lungs.

OHSS is usually mild and causes no more than a slight lower abdominal discomfort in most cases.

Although uncommon, it warrants medical attention as it can be potentially life threatening if left untreated.

OHSS can affect

- Kidneys, liver and lungs causing organ failure
- A serious, but rare complication such as a blood clot (thrombosis) can cause stroke or respiratory problems.

When detected early and managed appropriately, the condition can be controlled. There is currently no evidence of problems in the baby as a result of OHSS.

## Occurrence of OHSS

As many as one in three (33%) women develop mild OHSS. The severe form will affect less than one percent of patients that may require hospital admission and treatment.

## Symptoms

You may be developing OHSS if you experience some or all of the following symptoms:

- Persistent lower abdominal discomfort
- Nausea and vomiting
- Bloating or swelling of the abdomen and genital area
- Shortness of breath
- Dehydration
- Reduction of urine volume
- Abdominal pain

## Medical attention

OHSS is usually self-limiting and can be treated at home with rest.

- Make sure you drink clear fluids at regular intervals.
- Make sure you do not drink in excess.
- If you have pain, take ordinary paracetamol. You should avoid anti-inflammatory drugs (aspirin or aspirin-like drugs such as ibuprofen), which can affect the kidneys' function.
- Even if you feel tired, make sure you continue to move your legs.

Immediate medical attention is required should the symptoms persist or worsen. They include:

- Vomiting
- Urinary problems
- Chest pain or any difficulty in breathing

In this instance, admission to hospital for treatment and close monitoring are required. Most of the time, the symptoms will subside in five to 15 days.

You should report any concerns at any time to KKIVF or the Urgent O&G Centre which is located at Basement 1, Women's Tower.

## Prevention

Prevention is the best form of treatment and we will endeavour to avoid OHSS at all stages.