The Hewitt Fertility Centre

Liverpool Women's NHS Foundation Trust

Embryoscope™ Information Leaflet

Patient Information

During treatment by in-vitro fertilisation (IVF) or intracytoplasmic sperm injection (ICSI), your embryos are kept in strictly controlled and heated incubators. Over a period of 2 – 6 days your embryos are regularly examined to see which are developing normally and are most likely to result in a pregnancy.

Historically, monitoring your embryo's development involved removing the plastic dishes in which they are growing from the incubator to examine them under a heated microscope. They must then be returned to the incubators as quickly as possible to keep the temperature and surrounding conditions constant and to avoid any damage to your embryos. In order to reduce these disturbances, they are only checked once or twice a day, offering brief 'snapshots' of your embryos. During these checks the embryologist assesses your embryos to determine which will have the highest chance of implantation.

By contrast, the Embryoscope™ offers continuous "live" surveillance of your embryos in a safe, undisturbed and controlled environment from which they do not have to be removed for examination. A large screen provides a continuous view of the embryos within the incubator.

In addition, continuous time-lapse 'moving' images are stored automatically within the patient file for review at any time during the embryo's development. If you wish, we can provide you with a video containing the images of your embryos after your transfer.

In addition, the EmbryoScope™ logs the embryos' development at all times so that their progress can be reviewed. We can see things that we might have missed before because it didn't happen at a time when we were examining them under the microscope. Also, in the fallopian tubes and womb, nature provides a very stable environment for embryos and we try to mimic this in the IVF lab – this new incubator is the best thing we have had so far to do that. It is possible to observe key development events in the EmbryoScope™, this helps us select which embryos are most likely to result in pregnancy and there is a growing body of evidence to suggest that its use increases the chance of treatment working.

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"Embryos are dynamic, constantly changing as they grow and develop. Historically we used to only get a 'snapshot' view of the embryos. With the Embryoscope™ we can now see exactly how an embryo has developed for the entire time it has been in our care, without having to remove it from its optimal environment"

Dr Gregoire, Scientific Director of The Hewitt Fertility Centres

PLEASE NOTE: EmbryoScope™ Time lapse technology is used in all cycles at The Hewitt Fertility Centre as standard practice and will not be charged as an 'add-on' to your treatment.

This leaflet can be made available in different formats on request. If you would like to make any suggestions or comments about the content of this leaflet, then please contact the Patient Experience Team on 0151 702 4353 or by email at pals@lwh.nhs.uk

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