

# Ovulation induction

## Risks associated with carrying more than one baby (multiple pregnancy)

**This fact sheet explains the risks of having a multiple pregnancy when using ovulation induction medicine. It will help you decide whether to continue with your treatment cycle if more than one follicle is likely to release an egg.**

As part of your ovulation induction treatment cycle, you've been prescribed either letrozole tablets or FSH injections.

The goal is for one egg to grow and be released ready for fertilisation. However, sometimes more than one follicle grows and more than one egg may be released.

If several eggs are released and become fertilised, there is a risk of a multiple pregnancy. This means carrying more than one baby at the same time.

People who use fertility medicines to help them ovulate have a higher chance of having a multiple pregnancy (twins or more).

- With letrozole, the chance of having a multiple pregnancy is less than 1 in 20.
- With FSH injections, up to 1 in 3 people may have a multiple pregnancy.

We carefully control the medicine dose and try to have no more than 2 mature eggs grow in each cycle. If 3 or more eggs develop during your treatment cycle, we will cancel the cycle automatically.

### What are the risks?

Multiple pregnancies can mean you'll need extra pregnancy appointments and more careful monitoring. Your babies might also need to spend time in special care or neonatal intensive care after they're born.

Twins and triplets are 2 to 3 times more likely to have complications. These can affect both the person carrying the babies and the babies themselves.

Other factors, like your age, weight, or other health conditions can increase these complications.

### Possible complications for you include:

- high blood pressure (pre-eclampsia)
- gestational diabetes
- problems with the placenta (the organ that feeds and supports your baby)
- bleeding
- needing a caesarean section (surgery to birth your baby through a cut in your belly).

### Possible complications for the babies include:

- being born early - this is known as being premature or pre-term
- not growing enough before birth
- breathing problems
- growing and learning more slowly
- having a disability
- dying.

Pregnancy complications are greatest for identical twins because they may share the same placenta.

Babies born premature have a higher risk of disabilities like cerebral palsy, hearing and vision problems, and a greater chance of dying shortly after birth.

### What are the next steps?

All multiple pregnancies are treated as high-risk pregnancies. They need care from specialist doctors and may require extra monitoring and treatments as needed.

If you decide not to continue with your ovulation induction cycle due to the risk of having a multiple pregnancy, please make sure to use protection (like a condom or diaphragm) when having sex or avoid sex for the rest of your cycle (at least 2 to 3 weeks)

Take this information home and take some time to think about what you want to do. Discuss it with your partner (if you have one) or someone you trust.

When you're ready, please let the nursing team know if you want to continue your treatment cycle this month or if you want to cancel it.

### For more information

If you have any questions or need more information, please contact the nursing team.

#### Reproductive Services Unit

- Reception: (03) 8345 3200
  - Nurse: (03) 8345 3200
- Monday to Friday 7.30am to 3.30pm

### Do you need an interpreter?



Interpreter

You can ask for an interpreter if you need one.

### Family Violence Support

#### 1800 Respect National Helpline

You can get help if you have experienced sexual assault, domestic or family violence and abuse.

You can call any time of day or night.

1800 737 732 (24-hour support service)

[1800respect.org.au](https://1800respect.org.au)