

Clomid (Clomiphene)

Information for Patients Fertility Clinic, University Hospital of Wales

What is clomid and why is it prescribed?

Clomid (clomiphene citrate) is used in women who do not ovulate (produce eggs) regularly each month leading to infertility. Clomid stimulates ova (eggs) to develop in the ovaries and be released ready for fertilisation.

Before taking Clomid

Sometimes medicines can have drug interactions. For these reasons, before you start taking Clomid it is important that your doctor knows:

- If you think you may already be pregnant
- If you have liver problems
- If you have been told you have ovarian cysts
- If you have been told you have a hormone-dependent tumour (this is a cancer which is made worse by hormones)
- If you have heavy or unusual menstrual periods
- If you are taking any other medicines. This includes any medicines you are taking without a prescription, such as herbal and complementary medicines.

How to take Clomid

Clomid is a tablet taken by mouth. The starting dose is usually 50mg a day from day 2 to day 6 of your menstrual cycle, day 1 being the day you start to bleed. To help you remember to take Clomid, take it around the same time every day. If you do forget to take a dose, speak with your doctor, as you may need to change your treatment cycle. Do not take two doses together to make up for a forgotten dose.

When is the optimal time to have intercourse?

You are recommended to have sexual intercourse at least 2-3 times per week, evenly timed throughout the month.

How is the response to treatment monitored?

You will be asked to attend for a blood test on day 21 of the first cycle to check your progesterone level. This will enable us to check if you have ovulated. It may take 3-4 days for the progesterone result to be available. Please email **Cav.Gynae.Fertility@wales.nhs.uk** for the result. If the blood test shows you have ovulated the same dose of Clomid can be repeated in the following cycles again from day 2 to day 6.

If ovulation has not occurred you will be advised to increase the dose to 100mg, this will again need to be taken daily from day 2 to day 6 of your cycle. You will also be sent a prescription with more tablets if the dose is increased. A further progesterone level blood test will be needed on day 21 of your cycle. If the test confirms ovulation, the same dose of Clomid can be repeated in the following cycles.

If bleeding does not occur by 6 weeks after your last Clomid tablet, you should perform a pregnancy test. If you are pregnant, you will not require further treatment and should report to your GP.

If your pregnancy test is negative, repeat the test in one week to confirm the result. If you are not pregnant, start another cycle of Clomid treatment at the same dose as above, on your next period between day 2 to day 6 of your cycle or contact the clinic for advice.

Duration of treatment

It is recommended that Clomid is taken for no more than six cycles initially. If a pregnancy has not occurred after six cycles you will be asked to see the consultant before being prescribed more Clomid. Some patients may not ovulate at all on Clomid. Under these circumstances alternative treatments will be discussed.

What if you have no menstrual cycle?

If you do not have regular, or have very infrequent periods, you will be given a progestin tablet (such as Provera) to induce bleeding. Then commence the Clomid on the second day after your induced period has started and follow the above instruction.

What side effects can this medication cause?

Side effects with Clomid are not common. More frequent symptoms include:

- Hot flushes, headache
- Abdominal discomfort (bloating or soreness)
- Breast discomfort
- Menstrual irregularities with bleeding or spotting between cycles

Occasionally visual symptoms can occur, including blurred or double vision and visual spots or flashes. If these occur you must stop treatment and inform your doctor immediately. If you experience stomach swelling, weight gain or shortness of breath you must also contact your doctor immediately. Prolonged use of Clomid (more than 12 cycles of treatment) may increase the risk of ovarian cancer and for this reason it is generally not used for more than 12 cycles of treatment.

You will find a full list in the manufacturer's information leaflet supplied with your medicine. If any other symptoms which you think may be due to these tablets speak to your doctor or pharmacist for advice.

Response to treatment

Approximately 7 out of 10 patients treated with Clomid will ovulate and 4 out of 10 will conceive. Most women who will ovulate do so during the first three months of treatment.

Multiple pregnancy

The incidence of twins is increased to 5-10%, but multiple births of more than twins are rare (less than 0.5%).

If you have any further questions please contact:

Cav.Gynae.Fertility@wales.nhs.uk

Useful websites

NHS Choices: www.nhs.co.uk

Infertility Network UK: www.infertilitynetworkuk.com