

CGF Glossary

Ablation

Destruction of the lining of the uterus using techniques such as a diathermy loop or roller ball.

Add-back

Add-back treatment means adding either hormones or non-hormonal substances to the GnRH analogue treatment that is used for endometriosis in order to avoid some of the side effects caused by the suppression of oestrogen. Hormones used as add-back are progesterone alone, oestrogen alone or a combination of oestrogen and progesterone. Examples of non-hormonal add-back therapies are vitamin D, calcitonin and PTH (parathyroid hormone).

Addison's disease

A rare endocrine disease that results from underproduction of aldosterone and cortisol (hormones) by the adrenal glands.

Adhesiolysis/adhesiotomy

Surgical removal of adhesions/scar tissue.

Adhesions

Scar tissue.

Adipose

Fat or tissue containing fat cells.

Adnexal tenderness

Discomfort within the uterus.

Adnexal tumour

A tumour within the uterus.

Aetiology/aetiology

To look at the cause and nature of a disease or illness.

Alkaline haematin method

Measures menstrual blood loss by collecting sanitary protection and extracting the blood.

Alpha-fetoprotein test (AFP test)

This test checks the woman's blood between 16-20 weeks of pregnancy for neural tube defects such as a brain deformity or spina bifida. This test can give inaccurate results so positive results are usually checked by taking another blood sample, ultrasound and amniocentesis.

Amenorrhea

The absence or stopping of a woman's menstrual periods.

Amniocentesis

A needle is inserted into the abdomen of the 16 week pregnant woman (under local anaesthetic) to remove some amniotic fluid from her uterus. Cells in the fluid are tested for signs of foetal abnormalities and to identify the sex of the baby.

Amniotic fluid

The fluid that surrounds the developing foetus while it is in the uterus.

Ampulla

The middle portion of a woman's fallopian tube and in men the upper end of the vas deferens tube where sperm is stored.

Anaemia

A reduced blood count that results in a lack of oxygen to the tissues, usually due to factors such as poor nutrition, blood loss or exposure to toxins.

Androgen

A hormone or drug, which stimulates the development of male sex organs and sexual characteristics. The use of or excessive production of androgens in women causes male characteristics to develop (e.g. deepening of voice and increased facial hair growth).

Anovulation

The absence of ovulation. A woman can still be having menstrual periods but she is not ovulating.

Antibody

A substance made by the body that normally attacks foreign bodies to prevent infection. Sometimes antibodies can attack parts of the body. This results in infertility if they destroy sperm cells.

Antifibrinolytics

Medicines used to thicken the blood by slowing down the breakdown of clots to reduce blood loss.

Anti-sperm bodies/anti-bodies to sperm

When there are antibodies in the cervical mucous which kill off the sperm. Also known as cervical hostility. Antibodies that destroy sperm can also be produced by men.

Artificial insemination (AI)

When sperm is placed into a woman's vagina as close to the cervix as possible in order to fertilise an egg.

Artificial insemination donor (AID)

When sperm that is artificially inseminated comes from a male donor. Also known as DI (donor insemination).

Artificial insemination husband (AIH)

When sperm that is artificially inseminated comes from the woman's husband or partner.

Ascites

A build up of fluid in the abdomen, making it swollen and bloated.

Ascitic fluid

Thin and watery fluid in the abdominal cavity.

Aspiration cycle

Initiated ART cycle in which one or more follicles are punctured and aspirated irrespective of whether or not oocytes are retrieved.

Assisted hatching

An in vitro procedure in which the zona pellucida of an embryo (usually at eight-cell stage or a blastocyst) is perforated by chemical, mechanical, or laser-assisted methods to assist separation of the blastocyst from the zona pellucida.

Assisted reproductive technology (ART)

All treatments or procedures that include the in vitro handling of human oocytes and sperm or embryos for the purpose of establishing a pregnancy. This includes, but is not limited to, in vitro fertilization and transcervical embryo transfer, gamete intrafallopian transfer, zygote intrafallopian transfer, tubal embryo transfer, gamete and embryo cryopreservation, oocyte and embryo donation, and gestational surrogacy. ART does not include assisted insemination (artificial insemination) using sperm from either a woman's partner or a sperm donor.

Asthenospermia

Poor sperm movement or motility.

Atypical

Irregular, different and sometimes precancerous

Azoospermia

The absence of any sperm in the semen

Benign

Cells or tumours that are not malignant so there is no cancer.

Bilateral oophorectomy

Removal of both ovaries

Bioavailability

The effectiveness of a drug or other substance to reach the affected tissue.

Biopsy

The removal and examination of tissue from the body for diagnostic purposes.

Biphasic basal body temperature chart (BBTC)

The basal or base temperature is the body temperature of a person recorded upon waking. When recorded on a graph, the shape of the curve produced can show when ovulation has taken place in a woman.

Birth defect

structural, functional, or developmental abnormalities present at birth or later in life, due to genetic or non-genetic factors acting before birth. Blastocyst: an embryo with a fluid-filled blastocoele cavity (usually developing by five or six days after fertilization).

Cadaver

A term to describe a dead body (can be either animal or human) that is used for medical research or as a source of tissue.

Cancelled cycle

an ART cycle in which ovarian stimulation or monitoring has been carried out with the intent of undergoing ART but which did not proceed to follicular aspiration or, in the case of a thawed embryo, to transfer.

Cautery

The use of a caustic agent, hot instrument or electric current to destroy tissue

Cautery of hyper granulation

The removal of excessive tissue growth such as scar tissue or adhesions.

Cervical hostility

Where the secretions produced by the cervix are so acidic that sperm are unable to survive.

Cervical mucus

Secretions produced by the cervix.

Cervical neoplasia

Sometimes called CIN neoplasia and dysplasia. Describes abnormal cells in the cervix that are not cancerous but could develop into a cancer if left untreated.

Cervix

The bottom part of the uterus situated at the top of the vagina which opens up to allow the birth of a baby.

Chemical pregnancy

A short-lived pregnancy that can only be detected with blood tests.

Chorionic villi sampling (CVS)

A procedure that removes tissue from the start of the developing placenta to check for genetic abnormalities. This procedure is usually carried out early in the pregnancy at 8-14 weeks and can also be used to identify the sex of the baby.

Clinical abortion

An abortion of a clinical pregnancy which takes place between the diagnosis of pregnancy and 20 completed weeks of gestational age.

Clinical pregnancy

Evidence of pregnancy by clinical or ultrasound parameters (ultrasound visualization of a gestational sac). It includes ectopic pregnancy. Multiple gestational sacs in one patient are counted as one clinical pregnancy.

Clinical pregnancy rate

Number of clinical pregnancies expressed per 100 initiated cycles, aspiration cycles, or embryo transfer cycles. When clinical pregnancy rates are given, the denominator (initiated, aspirated, or embryo transfer cycles) must be specified.

Clotting disorders

Any blood clotting abnormality sometimes called a coagulation disorder.

Coitus

Sexual intercourse.

Concomitant ovarian pathology

More than one abnormality of the ovary.

Controlled ovarian hyper stimulation (COH)

Medical treatment to induce the development of multiple ovarian follicles to obtain multiple oocytes at follicular aspiration.

Creutzfeld-Jacob Disease (CJD)

A rare disease that results in fatal degeneration of brain and nervous tissue. There is no cure and it invariably causes death. It is often described as the "human form of mad cow disease" because its actions upon the nervous system are similar to that of BSE (Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy) seen in cows and scrapie in sheep.

Cryoablation

Freezing technique to destroy the lining of the uterus

Cryopreservation or cryostorage

Freezing and storage of gametes, zygotes, or embryos.

Cyclical blood loss

Blood loss relating to the menstrual cycle

Diathermy

The use of extreme electrical current to cauterise and destroy tissue. Diathermy ablation is used as a treatment for heavy menstrual bleeding to burn away the lining of the uterus.

Delivery rate

Number of deliveries expressed per 100 initiated cycles, aspiration cycles, or embryo transfer cycles. When delivery rates are given, the denominator (initiated, aspirated, or embryo transfer cycles) must be specified. It includes deliveries that resulted in a live birth and/or stillbirth. Note: The delivery of a singleton, twin, or other multiple pregnancy is registered as one delivery.

Distensible

Able to distend stretch and enlarge.

Distension media

Used during surgery to stretch out (or inflate) uterine cavity. Distension media include gas (e.g. CO₂), low viscosity fluids (e.g. saline solution) and high viscosity fluids.

Donor insemination (DI)

When sperm from a male donor is placed into a woman's vagina, cervix or uterus to achieve pregnancy. This can be done through a clinic or by self administration.

Dysfunctional uterine bleeding

Bleeding from the uterus that is abnormal, either in the amount of blood lost or the timing of the blood loss, or both for which there is no pathological cause

Dysmenorrhoea

Painful menstrual periods.

Dyspareunia

Pain when having sexual intercourse.

Dysplasia

Abnormal cell development can be cell size, shape and number.

Early neonatal death

Death occurring within the first seven days after delivery.

Ectopic pregnancy

A pregnancy that occurs outside of the uterus.

Egg donation

The removal of an ovum from one woman to be used for another woman.

Ejaculate

The fluid containing sperm that is released from a man's penis.

Elective cryopreservation

Planned freezing of embryos.

Electrocautery

Where a loop or roller ball is used to burn off the lining of the uterus.

Embryo

Product of conception from the time of fertilization to the end of the embryonic stage eight weeks after fertilization (the term pre-embryo or dividing conceptus, has been replaced by embryo).

Embryo donation

The transfer of an embryo resulting from gametes that did not originate from the recipient or her partner.

Embryo transfer (ET)

Procedure in which embryos are placed in the uterus or fallopian tube.

Embryo transfer cycle

ART cycle in which one or more embryos are transferred into the uterus or fallopian tube.

Endometrial ablation

see ablation and endometrial destruction

Endometrial biopsy

The removal and examination of a sample of tissue from the lining of the uterus for diagnostic purposes.

Endometrial destruction

Destruction of the lining of the uterus using techniques such as laser, electrocautery, diathermy loop, roller ball and radio frequency.

Endometrial neoplasia

Any new or abnormal growth on the lining of the uterus, that could be either benign or malignant.

Endometrial thinning

The use of techniques and treatments to thin the lining of the uterus.

Endometriosis

This painful condition occurs when endometrial tissue, which usually grows in the uterus, grows in other parts of the body such as the ovaries, fallopian tubes and pelvis. Cysts and endometriosis scar tissue can form and grow with each menstrual period. This can be associated with infertility.

Endometritis

Inflammation of the endometrial/lining of the uterus.

Endometrium

The mucous membrane lining of the uterus.

Epithelium

The cells which make up the internal and external surfaces of the body such as the skin, inside of the lungs and the ovaries.

Estrone

A type of the oestrogen hormone.

Ethamsylate

A drug used to reduce bleeding, particularly if there is a clotting problem.

Excise/excision

To cut or remove.

Exogenous

Developed or originating outside the organism, as in exogenous disease, for example insulin produced by the body would be an ENDOGENOUS supply but insulin produced in a lab and then given to the body is called an EXOGENOUS supply.

Fallopian tube

The tube that carries the egg from the ovary to the uterus. Women usually have two fallopian tubes.

Fallopian tube sperm perfusion (FSP)

When a large number of sperm are deposited into the woman's fallopian tube to improve the chance of conception.

Fertilization

The penetration of the ovum by the spermatozoon and fusion of genetic materials resulting in the development of a zygote.

Fetus

The product of conception starting from completion of embryonic development (at eight completed weeks after fertilization) until birth or abortion.

Fibrinolysis

Treatment used to dissolve blood clots.

Fibroids

Benign growths or tumours in the uterus.

Flurbiprofen

An NSAID - non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drug

Follicle

The sac in which an egg develops in the ovary.

FSH (follicle-stimulating hormone)

A hormone produced and released from the pituitary gland. In women it stimulates the production of oestrogen and follicles in the ovary ready for ovulation. In men it stimulates the production of sperm.

Full-term birth

A birth that takes place at 37 or more completed weeks of gestational age. This includes both live births and stillbirths.

Gamete intrafallopian transfer (GIFT)

ART procedure in which both gametes (oocytes and sperm) are transferred to the fallopian tubes.

Gastrointestinal

Affecting the digestive system, particularly the stomach and intestines/bowel.

Genetic predisposition

Having genes that give a susceptibility to develop a particular disease or condition.

Genital prolapse

Usually refers to a dropping down of the vagina or uterus from their usual position.

Germ cells

Special cells in the ovary, which can mature into eggs/ovum.

Gestational age

Age of an embryo or fetus calculated by adding 14 days (2 weeks) to the number of completed weeks since fertilization.

Gestational carrier

A woman in whom a pregnancy resulted from fertilization with third-party sperm and oocytes. She carries the pregnancy with the intention or agreement that the offspring will be parented by one or both of the persons that produced the gametes.

Gestational sac

A fluid-filled structure containing an embryo that develops early in pregnancy usually within the uterus.

Golombok Rust Inventory of Marital State

A questionnaire used to obtain a measure of the overall quality of a marriage relationship.

Gonadotropin-releasing hormone (GnRH α)

A substance produced by the hypothalamus to enable the pituitary gland to secrete LH (luteinizing hormone) and FSH (follicle-stimulating hormone)

Gonadotropins

Pituitary hormones FSH and LH which stimulate the testes and ovaries.

Gravidity

Term used to describe the number of pregnancies a woman has had.

Haematoma

A collection of clotted blood that can occur in a wound following surgery or as a result of severe bruising.

Haemoglobin

The protein in red blood cells which carries oxygen in the blood.

Haemorrhage

A significant loss of blood that if severe enough may require a blood transfusion

Haemostasis

The process whereby bleeding is halted.

Hatching

The process that precedes implantation by which an embryo at the blastocyst stage separates from the zona pellucida.

hCG (Human chorionic gonadotrophin)

A hormone produced by placental tissue that can be measured in the blood and urine of pregnant women

hMG

An injectable preparation that is obtained from the urine of menopausal women, human menopausal urinary gonadotropin has biological activity similar to that of follicle-stimulating hormone, and is used with chorionic gonadotropin to induce ovulation

Histology

The laboratory examination of the structure, composition and function of body tissues.

Homologous

The same as or similar to.

Host uterus

- see gestational carrier.

Hypermenorrhea

Excessive uterine bleeding at regular intervals such as with the menstrual period.

Hyperplasia

An abnormal increase in the size of an organ or tissue due to excessive growth of new but normal cells.

Hyopituitarism

The medical condition where the pituitary gland produces lower than normal amounts of its hormones.

Hypothalamus

The part of the brain that controls the production of hormones and their release by the pituitary gland.

Hysterectomy

The surgical removal of the uterus/womb. This can be done vaginally, laparoscopically or through abdominal surgery.

Hysterosalpingectomy

Surgical removal of the uterus and fallopian tubes.

Hysterosalpingography

The taking of internal specialised x-ray pictures of the uterus and fallopian tubes.

Hysteroscope

A small telescope inserted into the vagina to look at the inside of the uterus.

Hysteroscopy or hysteroscopic surgery

When the uterus is examined with a hysteroscope to look for any abnormality.

Hysterotomy

An incision/cut into the uterus.

ICSI (Intra-cytoplasmic sperm injection)

When an egg is surgically removed from a woman and injected with a single sperm. If fertilisation is successful the embryo is placed into the woman's uterus. This technique is used when a male partner has a low sperm count or other sperm related problem.

Idiopathic menorrhagia

Heavy menstrual bleeding with no known cause.

Implantation

The attachment and subsequent penetration by the zona-free blastocyst (usually in the endometrium) which starts five to seven days following fertilization.

Impotence

The inability to have or maintain an erection of the penis.

In situ

Confined to one place; has not spread anywhere else.

Incontinence

Poor or no control over passing urine or bowel movements.

Infertility

Failure to conceive after at least one year of unprotected coitus.

Initiated cycles

ART treatment cycles in which the woman receives ovarian stimulation or monitoring, in the case of spontaneous cycles, irrespective of whether or not follicular aspiration was attempted.

Insemination/inseminate

The insertion of semen into the uterus through the cervix.

Intercurrent illness

An illness that occurs during another illness.

Intermenstrual bleeding

Bleeding that occurs in the middle of a cycle between menstrual periods.

Intracytoplasmic sperm injection (ICSI)

IVF procedure in which a single spermatozoon is injected through the zona pellucida into the oocyte.

Intramural extension

Something that extends from within the wall of an organ in the body.

Intrauterine

Inside the uterus.

Intrauterine Insemination (IUI)

The mechanical insertion of semen into the uterus through the cervix.

Intravaginal

Within the vagina.

In vitro fertilization (IVF)

An ART procedure which involves extracorporeal fertilization.

Laparoscope

A long tube with a fibre-optic telescope and light attached to it which is inserted through a small incision in the abdomen so the outside surface of the uterus, other parts of a woman's reproductive system and organs in the lower abdomen and pelvis can be examined.

Laparoscopy

A surgical procedure where a long tube with a fibre-optic telescope (the laparoscope) is inserted into a woman's abdomen to examine her reproductive parts, diagnose any problems or to remove eggs from her ovaries.

Laparoscopic Bipolar Coagulation

A procedure used for women with symptomatic fibroids. Laparoscopic or key-hole surgery is done through a natural body opening or through a small incision. An electrical current is passed through the fibroid by means of electrical conducting forceps, causing the fibroid to wither. The main advantages are absence of haemorrhage and restricted thermal injury to the surrounding tissue.

Laparotomy

An incision through the abdominal wall.

Laser ablation

see ablation and endometrial destruction

Lavage

A washing out procedure used in the removal of an embryo from a donor woman.

Leiomyoma/leiomyomata

Benign tumours of the uterus also known as fibroids or myoma uteri.

Libido

Sexual drive

Live birth

A birth in which a fetus is delivered with signs of life after complete expulsion or extraction from its mother, beyond 20 completed weeks of gestational age. Live births are counted as birth events (e.g., a twin or triplet live birth is counted as one birth event).

Live birth delivery rate

Number of live birth deliveries expressed per 100 initiated cycles, aspiration cycles, or embryo transfer cycles. When delivery rates are given, the denominator (initiated, aspirated, or embryo transfer cycles) must be specified. It includes deliveries that resulted in at least one live birth. Note: The delivery of a singleton, twin, or other multiple birth is registered as one delivery.

LUNA (Laparoscopic uterine nerve ablation)

The cutting of nerves in the uterus to stop chronic pain. This is carried out laparoscopically through a small incision in the abdomen so the outside surface of the uterus and uterine nerves can be seen.

Luteal phase

The last 14 days of the menstrual cycle when progesterone is being produced.

Luteal progesterone

Elevated progesterone is luteal phase if ovulation occurs.

Luteinising hormone (LH)

A hormone produced and released by the pituitary gland. In women it is responsible for ovulation and progesterone production. In men it stimulates the production of testosterone and is involved with the production of sperm cells.

Magnetic resonance imaging (MRI)

A radiology procedure for looking at tissues inside the body that have a high fat and water content that cannot be seen using other radiology techniques such as x-ray and ultrasound.

Malformation rate

Includes all structural, functional, genetic, and chromosomal abnormalities identified in aborted tissue or diagnosed before or after birth.

Malignant

Abnormal invasive cell growth that progresses and is usually described as cancer.

Medically assisted conception

Conception brought about by noncoital conjunction of the gametes. Includes ART procedures and intrauterine, intracervical, and intravaginal insemination with semen of husband/partner or donor.

Mefenamic acid

An NSAID - non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drug which reduce inflammation, pain and menstrual blood loss.

Menarche

The start of menstrual periods in adolescence.

Menopause

When a woman's ovaries stop producing eggs and monthly menstrual periods cease. The woman is no longer able to have children.

Menorrhagia

Heavy menstrual bleeding in excess of 80 mls per menstrual cycle.

Menses

Menstrual period.

MESA (Micro-epididymal sperm aspiration)

A technique for removing sperm from men who have sperm related problems.

Metaplasia

Abnormal cells but not cancer so metaplasia of the peritoneum refers to abnormal cells in the lining of the abdominal and pelvic cavities.

Micromanipulation (also referred to as assisted fertilization)

The use of special micro manipulative technology that allows operative procedures to be performed on the oocyte, sperm, or embryo.

Microsurgical epididymal sperm aspiration (MESA)

Procedure in which spermatozoa are obtained from the epididymis by either aspiration or surgical excision.

Missed abortion

A clinical abortion where the products of conception are not expelled spontaneously from the uterus.

Mobile uterus

A uterus that moves freely when examined, i.e. normal.

Morbidity

Illness or disease.

Morphology (of sperm)

The study of the shape and structure of the sperm. This evaluation is part of a semen analysis.

Motility (of sperm)

The ability of the sperm to move spontaneously. This evaluation is part of a semen analysis.

Myoma

A tumour growing in muscle.

Myosalpingeal contractions

Small muscular contractions in the fallopian tube that propel the ovum or embryo along.

Necrosis/necrotic

Dead/dying tissue.

Neonatal death

Death within 28 days of birth.

Neoplasia

The development of a tumour that can be either benign or malignant.

Neoplasm

Any new or abnormal growth, such as a tumour that can be either benign or malignant.

New-borns or infants born

The number of live births plus stillbirths.

Norethisterone

Progesterone oral contraceptive pill used for controlling menstrual blood loss.

NSAIDs

Non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs which reduce inflammation, pain and prostaglandin levels.

Nulliparous

A woman who has never given birth.

Oestrogen

Female sex hormones produced by the ovaries.

Oligomenorrhoea

Infrequent menstrual periods.

Oligospermia

When there is hardly any sperm in the semen.

Oocyte

The egg from a woman's ovary.

Oocyte donation

An ART procedure performed with third-party oocytes.

Oophorectomy

The removal of an ovary or ovaries

Open procedure

Where abdominal or pelvic surgery is carried out using a full abdominal incision.

Ova

A woman's reproductive cell (also known as an egg or oocyte).

Ovarian Hyperstimulation Syndrome (OHSS)

A condition that occurs from fertility drugs when a large number of follicles in the ovary are stimulated to develop and ovulate. This stimulation causes an enlargement of the ovaries.

Ovulation Induction

Medical treatment to produce ovulation.

Ovulation inhibition

Treatment to stop a woman ovulating, so she will not release eggs from her ovaries as usual during the menstrual cycle.

Ovulation/ovulatory

The release of an egg/ova from an ovarian follicle.

Ovulatory hCG (human chorionic gonadotrophin)

Hormone given to trigger ovulation in assisted reproduction.

Ovum

Plural of ova (also known as an egg or oocyte), a woman's reproductive cell.

Parity

Number of children a woman has given birth to.

Parous

Woman who has given birth one or more times.

Pathology

Abnormality in the body caused by a disease process.

Pelvic inflammatory disease (PID)

An infection of the pelvis or female reproductive organs. If left untreated scar tissue can develop leading to infertility.

Pelvic peritoneum

The membrane lining the wall of the pelvic cavity.

Perforation

A hole or rupture of an organ or other part of the body caused by trauma, surgery or a weak spot.

Peritoneum

The membrane lining the walls of the abdominal and pelvic cavities

Petechiae

Very small non-raised spots.

Pictorial chart

A method for measuring menstrual blood loss.

Pituitary gland

A small organ at the base of the brain that controls the growth and activity of the body by producing hormones.

Plasminogen activator inhibitors

Drugs used to reduce menstrual blood loss.

Plasminogen activators

Enzymes which dissolve blood clots.

Polycystic Ovary Syndrome (PCOS)

When a woman has enlarged ovaries with multiple cysts and the surface of the ovary is thickened. The woman may ovulate infrequently or not at all.

Polygenic - multifactorial pattern of inheritance

A condition or disease that is determined by several different genes.

Postcoital bleeding

Bleeding after sexual intercourse.

Post-coital testing

When sperm, vaginal and cervical secretions are looked at under a microscope soon after sexual intercourse to assess possible conception problems.

Postmenopausal

After the menopause.

Pouch of Douglas

A 'pouch' situated between the uterus and sigmoid colon.

Preclinical abortion

An abortion that takes place before clinical or ultrasound evidence of pregnancy.

Preclinical pregnancy (biochemical pregnancy)

Evidence of conception based only on biochemical data in serum or urine before ultrasound evidence of a gestational sac.

Preimplantation genetic diagnosis (PGD)

Screening of cells from preimplantation embryos for the detection of genetic and/or chromosomal disorders before embryo transfer.

Premenstrual syndrome (PMS) or premenstrual tension (PMT)

A range of distressing physical and emotional changes prior to a menstrual period which are relieved once the period begins.

Pre-operative

Before the operation.

Preterm birth

A birth that takes place after at least 20, but less than 37, completed weeks of gestation. This includes both live births and stillbirths. Births are counted as birth events (e.g., a twin or triplet live birth is counted as one birth event).

Primiparous

A woman who is giving birth for the first time.

Pro-drug

A compound that has to go through chemical changes in the body to become an effective treatment.

Progestagen/progestogen/progesterone

Hormones that can be used in the treatment of menstrual cycle problems. Progesterone is a hormone produced by the ovary that prepares the inner lining of the womb for pregnancy. It is elevated in the luteal phase only if ovulation occurred.

Prophylactic

Preventative.

Pruritis

Severe itching.

Pyrexia

A high temperature, often associated with infection.

Pyrogenic

Fever-inducing.

Quality-adjusted life-year assessment (QALY)

The calculation of the value and benefit of a treatment in relation to the age of a person and the cost of the treatment.

Recipient

In an ART cycle refers to the woman who receives an oocyte or an embryo from another woman.

Recombinant (as in recombinant FSH or recombinant insulin)

Is a naturally occurring hormone which has been made in the laboratory with the use of DNA technology. Recombinant technology examines the DNA sequence of a hormone. The sequence is then placed inside certain bacteria (bacterial factories), which produce a protein from the DNA sequence. This protein is then taken from the bacteria and packaged as a hormone.

Resection

The surgical removal of a part of the body. For uterine resection see ablation and endometrial destruction. A resection can be carried out by using hysteroscopic surgery.

Resectoscope

Surgical tool for scraping off the lining of the uterus.

Retroperitoneal

The retroperitoneal space is in front of the lower back and behind the lining of the abdominal (peritoneum).

Roller ball ablation

see ablation and endometrial destruction. An ablation can be carried out by using hysteroscopic surgery which requires the use of hysteroscope.

Rugae

Folds of mucous membrane.

Secondary infertility

The inability to conceive or carry a baby to term after one or more previous pregnancies.

Semen

A thick white fluid produced in the reproductive organs of men that usually contains the sperm cells produced in the testicles.

Sepsis

Infection that has spread throughout the body.

Serum screening

The systematic testing of blood to check for exposure to disease or the presence of a disorder that can be detected in the blood.

Sonographic

Another term for ultrasound or ultrasonography.

Spermatozoa/sperm

Male reproductive cells found in semen.

Spontaneous abortion

Spontaneous loss of a clinical pregnancy before 20 completed weeks of gestation or, if gestational age is unknown, of a weight of 500 g or less.

Stillbirth

A birth in which the fetus does not exhibit any signs of life when completely removed or expelled from the birth canal at or after 20 completed weeks of gestation. Stillbirths are counted as birth events (e.g., a twin or triplet stillbirth is counted as one birth event).

Stroma

The internal tissue that makes up an organ/bodypart or structure.

Submucous fibroids or myomas

Benign growths that protrude from the lining of the uterus into the uterine cavity.

Surrogate mother

- see gestational carrier.

TCRE (Transcervical resection of the endometrium or endometrial resection)

see ablation and endometrial destruction. A technique for removing the lining of the uterus. A resection can be carried out by using hysteroscopic surgery for visualisation. The procedure requires a resectoscope.

Teratogen/teratogenic

A substance (e.g. drug), agent or process, which causes physical abnormalities to the developing foetus.

Testicular sperm aspiration (TESA)

procedure in which spermatozoa are obtained directly from the testicle by either aspiration or surgical excision of testicular tissue.

TESE (Testicular sperm extraction)

A technique for removing sperm from the testicles. This is used for men who have a vasectomy or other blockage.

Testosterone

A male sex hormone made by the man's testes.

Thromboembolic event or embolism

Is when a blood clot comes away from the wall of a blood vessel and travels through the blood stream to another site blocking the blood flow. This blood clot is also called embolus.

Thrombogenic event

DVT or deep vein thrombosis where a blood clot gets lodged in a blood vessel and blocks the blood flow.

Thrombosis

A blood clot that blocks a blood vessel blocking the flow of blood.

Tranexamic acid

An antifibrinolytic drug used to reduce menstrual blood loss.

Tubal patency/patent tubes

When the fallopian tubes are intact and unblocked so they are capable of receiving sperm and transporting a fertilised egg to the uterus.

Ultrasound

Radiology sounds waves of a high frequency used to examine the inside of the body. Ultrasound is also used to visualise the developing foetus in the uterus to check size, growth and the presence of abnormalities.

Urinary retention

A build-up of urine due to difficulty with passing it normally.

Urinary stress incontinence

Poor or no control of passing urine plus leaking due to slack pelvic floor muscles.

Uterine Artery Embolisation

A procedure used in the treatment of fibroids. Small particles of polyvinyl or gelatine are injected into the arteries that supply blood to the fibroids which results in blockage of the arteries and withering of the fibroid.

Uterine Artery Ligation

Refers to the binding or tying of the uterine artery in order to control haemorrhage.

Uterine cavity

The pelvic space where the uterus is situated.

Uterine motility

Movement of the muscles of the uterus (womb).

Uterine perforation

A hole or rupture of the uterus caused by trauma, surgery or a weak spot.

Uterotubal flushes

The flushing of the uterus and tubes.

Uterovaginal prolapse

A prolapse involving both the uterus and vagina dropping from their normal places.

Vaginal atrophy

Decrease in size and shrinkage of the vagina. It usually occurs after the menopause and can cause symptoms of vaginal dryness, itching and painful sexual intercourse.

Vaginism/vaginismus

Painful spasm of the vagina that is severe enough to prevent sexual intercourse.

Vaginitis

Inflammation of the vagina.

Vas deferens

A thick-walled tube going from a man's testis into the ejaculatory duct. This tube carries the sperm from the epididymis (where sperm is stored and nurtured), to the penis.

Vault haematoma

A blood clot in the vagina or vaginal vault.

Virilism/Virilization

Masculinisation, Signs may include: increased body and facial hair, clitoral enlargement, deepening of the voice, and development of male-type baldness.

Virulent

The potential of an organism such as a virus to cause harm to the body.

Zygote

The diploid cell resulting from the fertilization of an oocyte by a spermatozoon which subsequently develops into an embryo.

Zygote intrafallopian transfer (ZIFT)

Procedure in which the zygote, in its pronuclear stage of development, is transferred into the fallopian tube.