

Cycle Monitoring

Most patients undergoing cycle stimulation at CHR are closely monitored by blood tests and ultrasounds. Blood hormone levels and the size of the ovarian follicles are used to track responses to medication and to predict when ovulation is likely to occur.

An appointment for blood testing and/or ultrasounds must be scheduled at all CHR offices. You will report for monitoring approximately every other day during a stimulated cycle. Blood tests and ultrasounds are performed early in the morning. Blood will be drawn from a vein in the crook of your arm and hormone levels including estradiol will be measured.

You may have a vaginal ultrasound performed during this same visit. Ultrasound has been used extensively in gynecology to provide detailed images of a woman's reproductive organs. Its safety has been confirmed by many large studies; unlike an X-ray, ultrasound involves no radiation. An instrument called a transducer is used. It bounces high frequency sound waves off internal organs and converts them into pictures displayed on a monitor. During a vaginal ultrasound this transducer, which is shaped like a tampon, is covered with a condom, lubricated with a sterile gel and inserted into the vagina. You will be given the option to insert the transducer yourself or have the ultrasonographer insert it. Using this technique the eggs developing in the ovaries can actually be counted and measured. In most instances an ultrasound causes little or no discomfort.

Your principal contacts during a monitored cycle will be members of the clinical staff, who perform the blood tests and ultrasounds. CHR physicians review test results daily and a staff member will call with your results and instructions later that same day. You may or may not know the person who contacts you. He/she is conveying the physician's instructions and may not be able to answer specific questions regarding your treatment. **It is not necessary to get confirmation of your instructions from a physician.** Please ask to speak with a physician immediately only if you feel it is absolutely necessary. In less urgent situations, call the following morning to schedule a consultation.