

Written for [Atlantic Reproductive Medicine Specialists](#)

Seeking a Solution to Infertility

Being labeled infertile is something that no woman, or couple, wants to experience. Bearing children is a rite of passage, a tradition that is shared by cultures all over the world. The possibility of not having children can make a person feel like their body has somehow betrayed them. The caring specialists and staff at Atlantic Reproductive Medicine Specialists understand and want to provide you with the support you need to build the family you have always wanted.

Discussing infertility is a highly personal and individual experience. The endocrinologists at Atlantic Reproductive Medicine Specialists want to help you assess your overall fertility so that you can decide what fertility treatments will work best for you. After a proper fertility assessment, we can determine your fertility window, discuss potential roadblocks to fertility, then prepare a plan that will suit you and your partner.

Causes of infertility

Infertility is described as not being able to conceive after one year of unprotected sex. It is a problem that is experienced by both women as well as men. Causes of infertility in men and women can be caused by physical, environmental, medical, and lifestyle issues.

- **Physical** characteristics of body parts associated with fertility can make conception more challenging for some. For women, this can include the contour of the uterus, blocked fallopian tubes, the appearance of some kinds of ovarian cysts, or uterine fibroids. Men may have low sperm count or poor sperm motility.
- **Environmental** causes of infertility may include over exposure to toxins in food, air, and water like pesticides and lead.
- **Medical** causes of infertility in women can include PCOS, problems with ovarian function or the fallopian tubes, sexually transmitted infections, irregular periods, etc. For men, the problem can be testicular dysfunction and sexually transmitted infections. Lingering effects from chemotherapy and radiation after a cancer diagnosis may also play a role in infertility for both men and women.
- **Lifestyle** issues like smoking, obesity, excessive weight loss, aging, stress, diabetes, alcohol abuse, use of steroids and other drugs may cause infertility.

All of these factors and more are taken into consideration during your initial fertility assessment.

Fertility treatments

The most popular fertility treatment at Atlantic Reproductive Medicine Specialists is in vitro fertilization -- better known as IVF. What IVF does is recreate the natural process of joining the sperm with an egg in a medical laboratory as opposed to inside of a woman's body.

IVF treatment is a 5-step process that typically looks like the following:

1. **Ovulation Induction:** Prior to IVF, your doctor will prescribe a series of medications that are designed to stimulate the production of healthy eggs during a short period of time. The more eggs a woman's body can produce, the more opportunities available for a successful conception.
2. **Egg Retrieval:** Once the eggs are ready to be harvested, the woman is given a mild sedative and local anesthesia. The eggs are removed and stored until the time of artificial insemination.
3. **Insemination:** An embryologist will take sperm from your partner or a donor, inseminate the stored eggs, and place them in an incubator.
4. **Preimplantation Genetic Screening:** The fertilized eggs are screened for genetic diseases prior to transfer into the womb to check for heritable diseases.
5. **Embryo Transfer:** After 5 days, the fertilized eggs are placed into the womb.

Screening for Genetic Defects

Atlantic Reproductive Medicine Specialists provides preimplantation genetic screening prior to transferring the fertilized egg to the womb. This embryo screening uses CCS Select and RMA Genetics to determine if the embryo will be likely to have a heritable disease. This technology empowers the woman or couple to make a decision that best suits their needs.

Sources:

Center for Disease Control and Prevention: Infertility FAQs
<http://www.cdc.gov/Reproductivehealth/Infertility>