



Sperm DNA Fragmentation Testing

Sperm DNA fragmentation testing, is it right for me?

A sperm is a special type of cell, responsible for transporting DNA from a man to the egg. The egg can then work to combine this DNA with the female DNA in the egg, to form a new set of DNA which will hopefully go on to develop into a new baby.

DNA fragmentation testing looks at the DNA carried by the sperm to see if it is damaged. The DNA carried by sperm is tightly packed to protect it, but it can become broken in places.

Your doctor will discuss with you if they feel testing may be of benefit to you. There is evidence that a high number of breaks may reduce the ability of that sperm to contribute to the birth of a baby, but this evidence is not yet strong enough to recommend the test for everyone. Though professional bodies disagree about the utility of the test as it stands, they all agree that more work should to be done to clarify the impact of DNA fragmentation on male fertility.

DNA fragmentation testing may be helpful if you have had unsuccessful treatment and there is no obvious cause. A high DNA fragmentation result might provide you with some information to help you decide your next steps. Some situations where high levels of DNA breaks are thought to occur are if you have a varicocele, are 45 or older, have had a chronic illness or exposure to environmental toxins. Lifestyle factors can also have a strong impact on the health of your sperm, and they include your diet, exercise, alcohol intake and smoking.

If you do have testing and find your level of DNA fragmentation is high, it is possible that lifestyle changes could have a positive impact. This could be as simple as adding some light exercise to your routine and taking a multivitamin.

For more information about lifestyle and fertility, please see the following patient information leaflet.

[Helping Your Fertility - Male](#)