Getting through the wait during fertility treatment



Small ways to support yourself while the answer is still unknown.

Waiting for appointments, updates or results can take up more of your day than other people realise. Hope, fear, numbness or frustration may come and go. These ideas are for you, with or without a partner. Choose what fits. [1]
This sheet includes words you can borrow, because talking with someone you trust, or with a professional, can make difficult things feel more manageable.

You do not have to stay positive

There is no conclusive evidence that stress changes fertility-treatment outcomes. Support matters because your wellbeing matters, whatever happens. [2]

1 Make a small plan for the next update

Ask your clinic how and when it will contact you, who to call if an update is delayed, and who can answer questions afterwards. Follow its instructions about tests and treatment. If practical, choose a private place for the news and leave some breathing space afterwards.

If you feel unwell or have worrying physical symptoms during treatment, contact your clinic promptly; do not wait for the next update. For a medical emergency, use the emergency numbers below. [6]

Someone I could contact is...

What would help from them?

Listening, company, practical help or space? You can ask for one thing, and change your mind later.

2 Give today a little shape

Choose one ordinary anchor: a meal, a familiar programme, a manageable task or time with someone you trust. It need not make you feel better immediately. If repeated searching leaves you unsettled, try a pause or a planned time to look. Keep essential clinic messages available.

One small thing I would like for today...

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Let people know what would help

Your news, your boundaries, your pace.

3 Words you can borrow

"I will tell you when I am ready; please do not keep checking."

"I know you want to help. Listening would help more than suggestions today."

"I care about you, but cannot manage this gathering. Could we meet quietly another time?"

Different needs can sit side by side

One person may want to talk; another may need quiet or distraction. Ask: "Would listening, company, practical help or space feel best today?" Neither person has to be the only source of support. [4]

When the result arrives

You do not owe anyone an immediate announcement. Ask the clinic what the result means and when decisions are needed. Counselling can support you before, during or after treatment, including after a positive result, an unsuccessful cycle or a decision to pause or stop. [3]

Bring in more support

Ask your fertility team or GP (family doctor) about counselling if distress persists, feels severe or makes everyday life difficult. For peer support in Ireland, visit nisig.com. Elsewhere, ask your clinic about local groups. Check privacy arrangements before joining. [1]

When you need someone to talk to, day or night

Samaritans 116 123 (Ireland, UK); text HELLO to 50808 (Ireland); call or text 988 (US, Canada); Lifeline 13 11 14 (Australia); elsewhere, findahelpline.com lists free helplines. For urgent advice, contact your GP, out-of-hours service or care team. Immediate danger: use the emergency numbers below. [5]

Sources and further reading

Original prompts, informed by the guidance below. Choose what fits; these are not tested treatments.

1. HSE: support with fertility problems (www2.hse.ie)
2. HFEA: getting emotional support (www.hfea.gov.uk)
3. NICE: counselling (QS73 / NG257, 2026) (www.nice.org.uk)
4. ESHRE: psychosocial care guideline (2015) (www.eshre.eu)
5. HSE: urgent mental health support (www2.hse.ie)
6. NHS: IVF risks and when to seek help (www.nhs.uk)

Sources checked 3 October 2026. Independent resource; no endorsement implied. Support lines checked 25 October 2026.

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