



## Welcome to Seattle Reproductive Medicine (SRM)

We are happy you have chosen SRM, and we look forward to working with you. Our goal as the medical staff is that your treatment be personalized, and that you feel cared for as an individual and/or couple throughout the whole process. We feel the most important step to making this happen is clear communication.

Our processes are outlined below, **with some common questions in bold**. We have also included a section on preconception health for your review.

We hope to exceed your expectations, and welcome your input at all times to improve your experience.

### Your Primary Clinical Care Team

Along with your primary SRM physician or nurse practitioner, you will be assigned a primary coordinator. You will likely meet with your coordinator at your new patient and most follow up appointments. She will discuss the timeline of your next steps.

#### **Will I see my primary SRM physician or nurse practitioner at every appointment?**

- Most ultrasound appointments are performed by our certified sonographers or nurse practitioners but will *sometimes* be with a physician.
- Our SRM physicians work as a team. Because many of the tests you do will be time-sensitive, we recommend you book your appointments with any available provider.
- Follow up appointments to discuss all results and make decisions about treatment plans will be done with your primary SRM physician or nurse practitioner.

### Patient Portal

We believe that you will find the Patient Portal important in supporting our communication with you as a valued patient. Features include:

- The ability to communicate with your clinical care team in a secure environment
- Access to view your lab results
- Ability to view upcoming scheduled appointments and setup email & text appointment reminders
- Opportunity to request appointments

### Scheduling Appointments

You may either request appointments through the patient portal or call our call center at 206-301-5000 (local for Seattle), and 509-321-5660 (local for Spokane) or 877-777-6002 (toll free) to schedule all of your appointments. Your coordinator is happy to answer questions about how to schedule the tests, but is unable to schedule the appointments for you and have no influence over appointment availability.

#### **Can I request a particular physician or nurse for my appointments?**

- We are happy to try and accommodate your requests, but are unable to guarantee that you'll see a specific physician or nurse, particularly when a test is time-sensitive.



## Test Results

After your first appointment, you will schedule a follow up appointment with your SRM physician or nurse practitioner to review all of your test results. The interpretation of those tests within the context of your personal history will be done by your physician or nurse practitioner, so all your questions can be answered and appropriate treatment plans can be discussed.

### *Will I receive a call about the results of my tests before my appointment?*

- No, you will not receive a call with diagnostic test results, including semen analysis results. But you may access your test results through the patient portal. It is important that you receive a full interpretation of the results, which requires physician input, and will be discussed at your follow up appointment. The exception to this is if there is an abnormal result that needs to be addressed immediately or if your coordinator tells you otherwise.

If you are in a treatment cycle, and have labs drawn as part of that cycle, you will receive a message through the portal or same day call with instructions for your next step. These portal messages and phone calls are done between 2:00-5:30 PM.

## Phone calls

We recognize that every question you have is important, and we work hard to return phone calls in a timely manner. The coordinators are meeting with patients throughout the day, so phone calls are often returned later in the afternoon, particularly if a question requires physician input. Please understand that phone calls will be returned in order of urgency and time-sensitivity, and non-urgent calls may require a 24-48 hour turn around.

## Weekend/After Hours Coverage

We do have limited appointments available in Seattle and Spokane on the weekends and holidays to monitor patients in active treatment cycles that cannot be done Monday through Friday. We also have nurses here to field urgent and time-sensitive calls. The numbers to call on the weekends are 206-301-5000 (local for Seattle), 509-321-5660 (local for Spokane) or 877-777-6002 (toll free). We ask that you wait until Monday to call your primary coordinator for any questions that are not urgent or time-sensitive. A physician will be paged after hours for any truly urgent matters. If you are having a life threatening emergency, however, you should call 911.

## Medication Request/Refill

If you have been given a prescription from your provider, please know that we typically order 3-6 refills as well. Therefore, **please contact your pharmacy directly if you need more or after each cycle and allow 48-72 hours for the refill request.** Often, insurance companies will only authorize a limited supply per month.

## Preconception Health

There are a variety of issues that could impact the health and outcome of any future pregnancies and should be resolved prior to conception. Since these are general medical issues and not infertility, the tests should usually be covered by your insurance.



## Genetic Screening

Many individuals carry gene mutations on one or more of their chromosomes that may lead to serious medical conditions in their children. If you carry a single recessive mutation you won't manifest any problems but if your partner carries the same hidden mutation then there is a relatively high likelihood that a very serious disease can occur in your child. The likelihood of you being a mutation carrier varies according to your ethnic background and can be as high as 1 in 25 (e.g. cystic fibrosis). A blood or saliva test can be ordered by your provider to screen you and/or your partner for 13 or more of these recessive mutations.

## Vaccinations

There are specific infections that can have serious consequences if acquired during pregnancy. These diseases (e.g. Rubella, Varicella, seasonal flu) can be prevented with targeted immunizations that need to be administered before pregnancy. Checking your immunity status is advised prior to conception even if you have previously had a Rubella or Varicella vaccination since adequate immunity may not have been achieved or immunity could have worn off. We also do recommend the flu vaccine. The injection is safe anytime, including pregnancy.

## Control of Chronic Disease

A pregnancy will be less risky to you and your child if you can control certain medical conditions.

Some examples are:

- Diabetes and blood sugar control
- Hypertension: some common medications are contradicted in pregnancy
- Obesity: obese women may become more fertile even with a small decrease in weight
- Hepatitis: many people are hepatitis carriers and should be evaluated for active liver disease.

If you have other underlying medical conditions or medications, we may refer you to a perinatologist for a consultation. A perinatologist is a doctor who specializes in high risk pregnancies.

## Cancer Screening

It is important that your annual exam and Pap smear is up to date before you conceive. A mammogram is also advised for all women age 40 or older.

## Medications

It is possible that a prescription drug may need to be changed or a dose modified before pregnancy. An over-the-counter medication you are using may pose risks in pregnancy. While generally continuing to respect non-traditional medicine, herbal supplements are discouraged because they are non-FDA approved. For more information go to [www.womenshealth.gov/publications/our-publications/fact-sheet/pregnancy-medicines](http://www.womenshealth.gov/publications/our-publications/fact-sheet/pregnancy-medicines)



## Thyroid Function

There is an increased prevalence of thyroid dysfunction in infertile women and thyroid function can change with pregnancy. It is important to check your thyroid status prior to conception and then again in early pregnancy.

## Lifestyle

You may need to modify your lifestyle in terms of alcohol consumption, smoking, and/or exercise to maximize your opportunity for a healthy pregnancy.

This includes:

- Maintaining a healthy weight
- Thirty to forty-five minutes of low to moderate intensity exercise 3 to 4 times per week is recommended. Moderate intensity is typically defined as heart rate less than 80% of maximum heart rate. For most women, heart rate during exercise should not exceed 140-150.
- Do not smoke
- Avoid or limit alcohol to no more than 1-2 alcoholic beverages per week (females should not consume alcohol during pregnancy)
- Prevent Toxoplasmosis by avoiding cat litter and not eating uncooked meat

## Healthy Diet, Folic Acid, and Iron

Food plays a vital role in overall health. It is important to have a well balanced diet with whole foods. Avoid high intake of soy products which contain estrogens. Limit beverages that contain caffeine.

To ensure against neural tube defects in your child you will want to be ingesting an optimal dose of folic acid (800 mcg per day) prior to conception. Iron is another important supplement as many women are unknowingly anemic when they conceive. Vitamin D is also essential for overall health and in general it is advised to take 1000 IU Vitamin D in the summer and 2000 IU daily the rest of the year. You can purchase separate Vitamin D over-the-counter and take in addition to your prenatal vitamin.

In looking for a Prenatal Vitamin to take we recommend a daily dosage of:

- 200 mg calcium
- 800 mcg folic acid
- 400 IU vitamin D
- 15 mg zinc
- 27 mg iron
- 200 mg DHA (can be a separate capsule)
- At least 150 mcg iodine (220 to 250 mcg is recommended in pregnancy)

We do not recommend a particular brand, but look for trusted supplements with one of the following labels:

