

## What Day Do I Start Having Blood Tests?

For most women with a regular menstruation cycle, (e.g. 28 to 30 days from the start of one period to the next period), we suggest the first blood be taken on day 8 to 10 of the cycle.

The first day of menstruation is called “day 1” of the cycle. Count forward to day 8, 9 or 10 and come for your first blood test then. If the first day falls on a Saturday or a Sunday, adjust your collection day to the Friday before or Monday after.

## What If My Doctor Requests Other Tests?

If your doctor has requested you have blood tests on days 2 and 3, or other tests such as day 21 progesterone, or pregnancy tests, such as hCG, we **will not** phone these results as they are not our routine tracking blood tests. We will phone you to advise how close to ovulation you are, when you need to have your next blood test or try for a pregnancy.

## How Do I Know When I Ovulate And To Try For A Pregnancy?

The pathologist will phone you each day with your results throughout the ovulation tracking and will advise you when you are ovulating. The day of the LH surge (ovulation) and the next day are generally the best time to try for a pregnancy. We will advise you to come back for a follow up blood test a week after ovulation (progesterone only) to check that there is sufficient hormone levels at this time. We don't phone you with this result.

## What Happens On Weekends And Public Holidays?

Most sites offer blood tests on Saturdays, but on Sundays and public holidays this may not be available. As advised previously, these days can be changed to suit you, discuss this with the pathologist who will phone your results to you during this time.

## What If I Am On Clomiphene (Clomid)?

It is important that we know if you are on this therapy. We need to ensure that we have contact details, **including the after hours contact details** of the doctor who prescribed the *Clomid* as there may be a requirement to discuss results with this doctor. These contact details must be in place before we begin the ovulation tracking service to ensure you have the best support for management of results.

## Fertility Clinic Patients And Assisted Reproductive Therapies (ART)

If you are managed by a fertility clinic or are having *ART*, please advise the collector at the time of your blood test. This will ensure the bill for this test goes to the correct place, and not you.

**PathWest pathologists will not phone fertility clinic patients as these patients will be given instructions from the clinic staff. However, the lab can test your samples on site (for same day results) if the fertility clinic arrange this with us.**

**For further information, please see you doctor or visit our website [www.pathwest.com.au](http://www.pathwest.com.au).**

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# Regional Ovulation Tracking (OVT)



Image courtesy of imagerymajestic at FreeDigitalPhotos.net

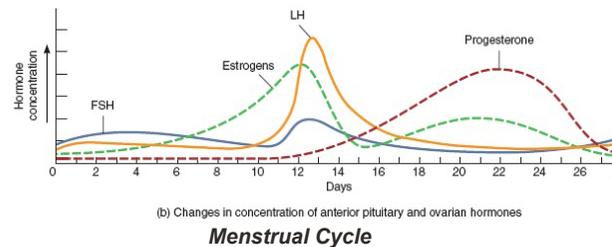
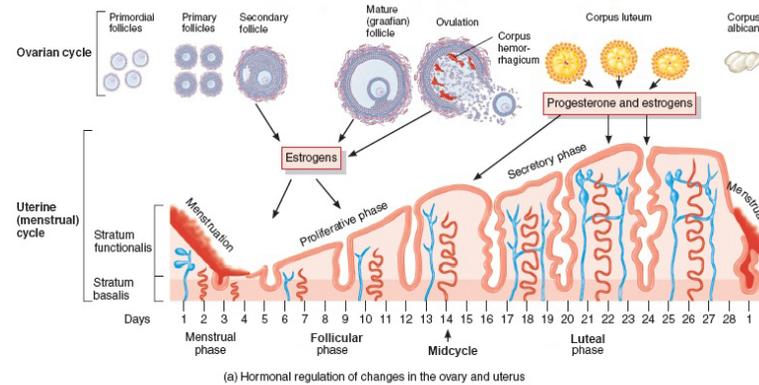
## Information for Patients

## What Is OVT and How Does It Work?

Ovulation tracking is having blood tests taken over different days to determine when a woman is most likely to be fertile. The tests taken include Oestradiol (E2), Luteinizing hormone (LH) and Progesterone (Prog). Sometimes a baseline follicle stimulating hormone (FSH) may also be helpful. In OVT testing it is important to understand the different phases of the normal menstrual cycle. We divide the cycle up into 3 main phases – Follicular, Midcycle and Luteal. See the diagram “Menstrual Cycle”.

Normally in the early part of the cycle (follicular phase) the E2 is low and the LH in a lower range. As a developing follicle matures and grows the E2 level starts to rise until this reaches a maximum just prior to midcycle. At midcycle a sudden rise in LH (LH surge) triggers the release of a mature egg and indicates ovulation. This is the ideal time to try for a pregnancy. After ovulation, the remaining “egg shell” (also called a corpus luteum), begins to secrete progesterone. Progesterone is an important hormone in the maintenance of early pregnancies. Measuring progesterone a week after the nominated ovulation documents the “best level” of luteal phase progesterone and helps to confirm that ovulation did occur.

If you have regular menstrual cycles but have failed to fall pregnant as expected, you may be referred by your doctor for OVT testing, the same applies if you have irregular or long cycles. This being the case, you may require more blood tests before midcycle is identified, or you may not have a midcycle pattern identified during testing. It is **not** uncommon to undergo 3 to 6 months of testing, depending on your age and medical history. Other options may be considered if pregnancy is not achieved in this time.



## How Do You Arrange To Have OVT Testing?

You must **arrange an appointment** with your doctor to discuss your individual requirements. OVT testing may not be appropriate for all women and your doctor is best placed to make this decision with you.

If you and your doctor agree you should have OVT with PathWest, the doctor will provide you with a number of **request forms** requesting the following tests “**OVT – E2, LH, Prog**”.

Ensure the doctor marks the request form as follows: “**Laboratory pathologist to phone patient**”. This is required so PathWest staff know that these results need to be phoned directly to you.

PathWest will provide copies of your results back to your own doctor from each test.

## What Do You Need To Do For Daily Tests?

Please ensure that you present for your **blood tests preferably by 9am** on the days advised by the pathologist. If blood samples are taken later in the day, it may not be possible to complete the testing in time to contact you with results the same day.

You need to **provide a reliable contact phone number**. Preferably, a mobile phone, to be contactable on the days of your blood tests. It is preferable that we **speak to you in person** to discuss your results. If you are unable to take calls please advise us, and we will try to assist as best we can. Results will be phoned from 11 am to early afternoon. Please be aware that the laboratory phone number or pathologists’ mobile phone number may appear as “**Private number**” or “**Unknown number**”.

**Remember:** Progesterone, taken a week after ovulation, results are not phoned through to you.

## Where Is This Service Provided?

This service is provided at selected regional sites only and **not** in the metropolitan area. Please check with your local laboratory or visit the PathWest website [www.pathwest.com.au](http://www.pathwest.com.au) for location contact details.