Infertility

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introduction

- Defined as the inability to fall pregnant after one year or more of unprotected regular sexual intercourse.
- With increasing age women might experience a further decline to spontaneous fertility thus investigations are carried out after six months rather than one year of not falling pregnant.

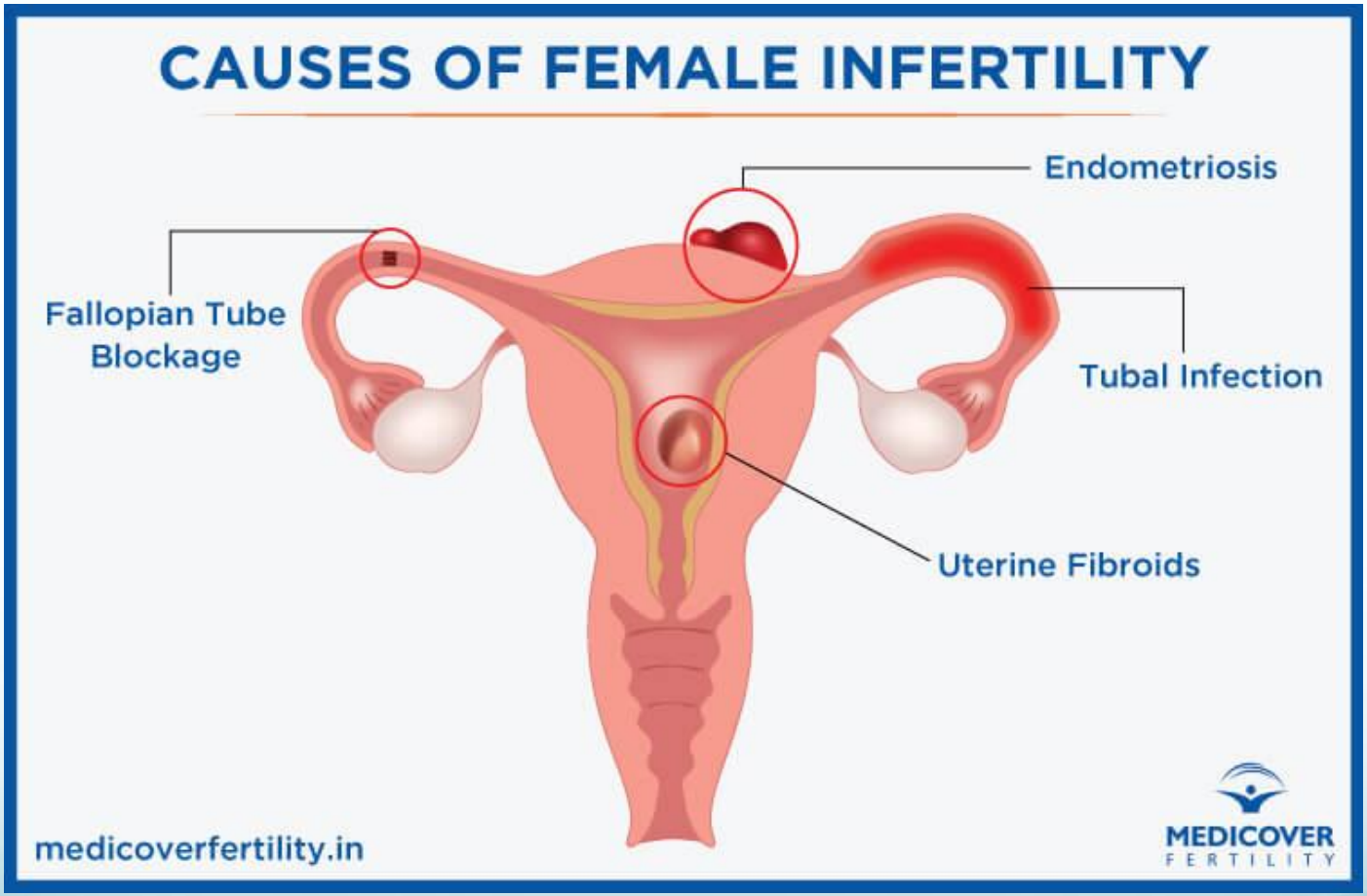
Infertility



introduction

- Pregnancy is a result of 4 processes:
- 1) a womans body must release an egg from one of her ovaries.
- 2) a sperm must fertilize the egg.
- 3) the fertilized egg must move from the fallopian tube into the uterus.
- 4) the embryo must attach to the uterine lining (implantation).

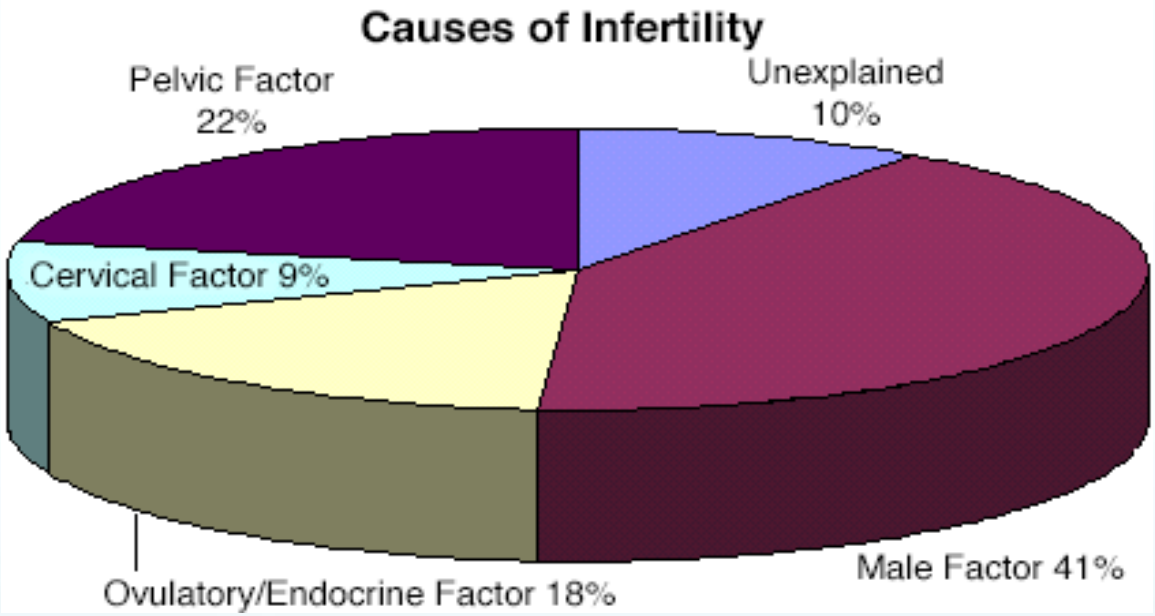
Infertility



introduction

- Infertility may occur at any one or more of the aforementioned steps.
- Infertility is common and occurs in about 4 percent of married women aged 15 to 44 in the United States.
- In most instances it is believed that infertility is a female issue however in 35 percent of couples a male factor is identified.

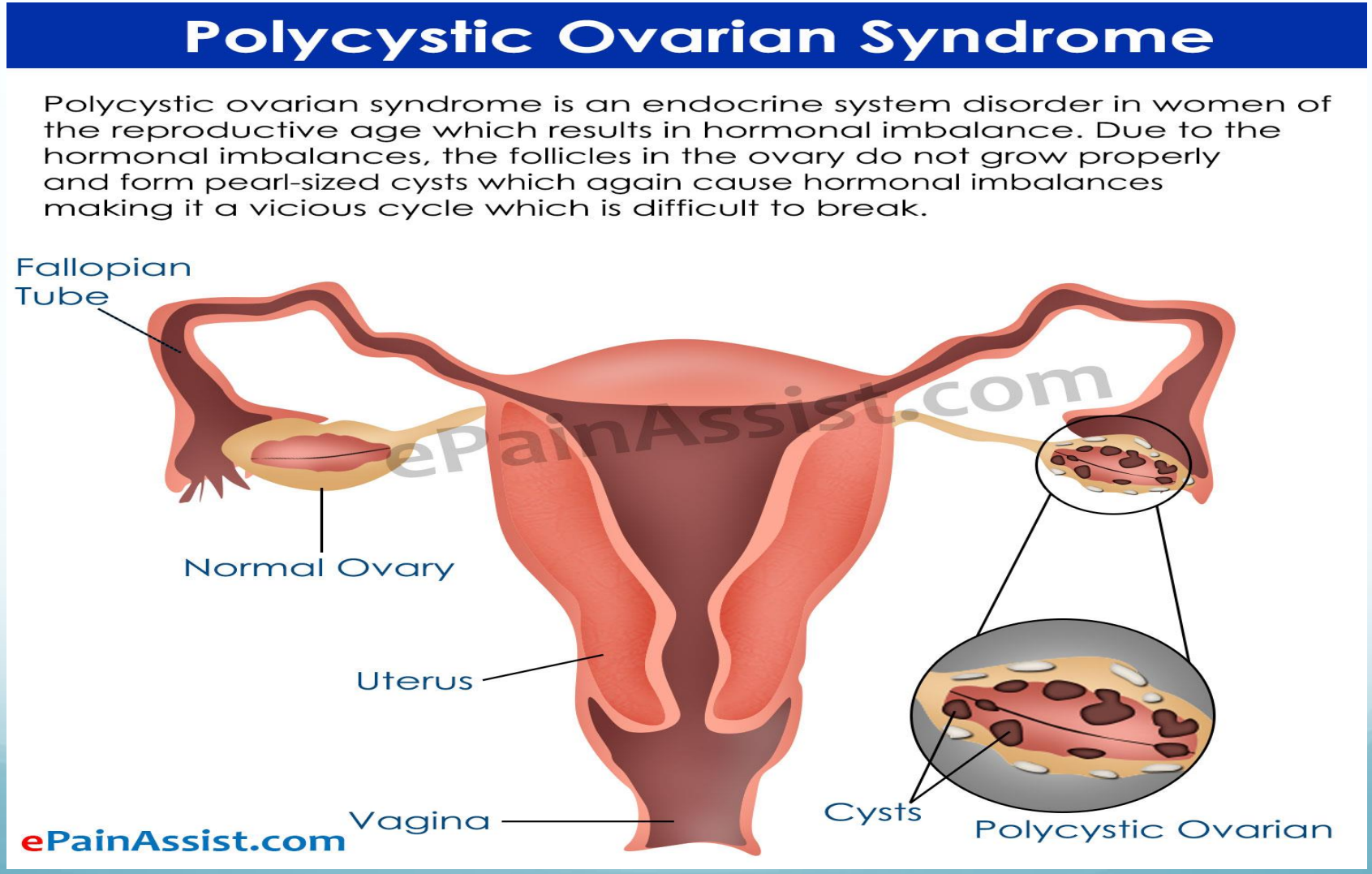
Causes of Infertility



Female Infertility Causes

- Disruption of ovarian function- a regular menstrual cycle lasts 28 to 35 days. If a women has irregular periods this could prevent ovulation or release of an egg.
- 1) Polycystic Ovary Syndrome is characterised by multiple cysts in both ovaries. This condition could be genetic or associated to obesity. It is synonymous with elevated testosterone levels which causes anovulation, acne and irregular periods.

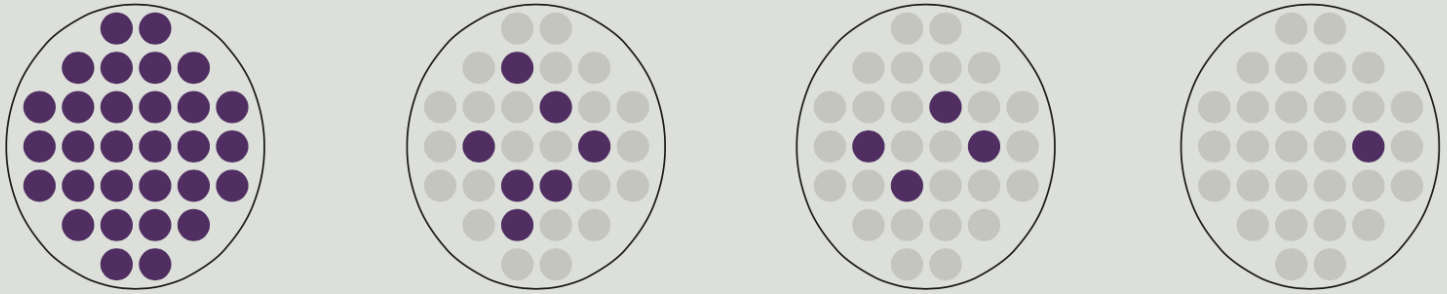
Female infertility



Female Infertility

- 2) decreased ovarian reserve- at puberty we have around 300 000 eggs. Over time this number deteriorates. The use of drugs, surgery or even congenital malformations could prematurely decrease the egg reserve.
- 3) lifestyle- improper or excessive weight loss or weight gain, poor exercise routine and stress may affect the hormonal pathway and lead to egg loss.

Female infertility



Birth
1.5 MILLION (100%)

Puberty
345,000 (23%)

Age 30
180,000 (12%)

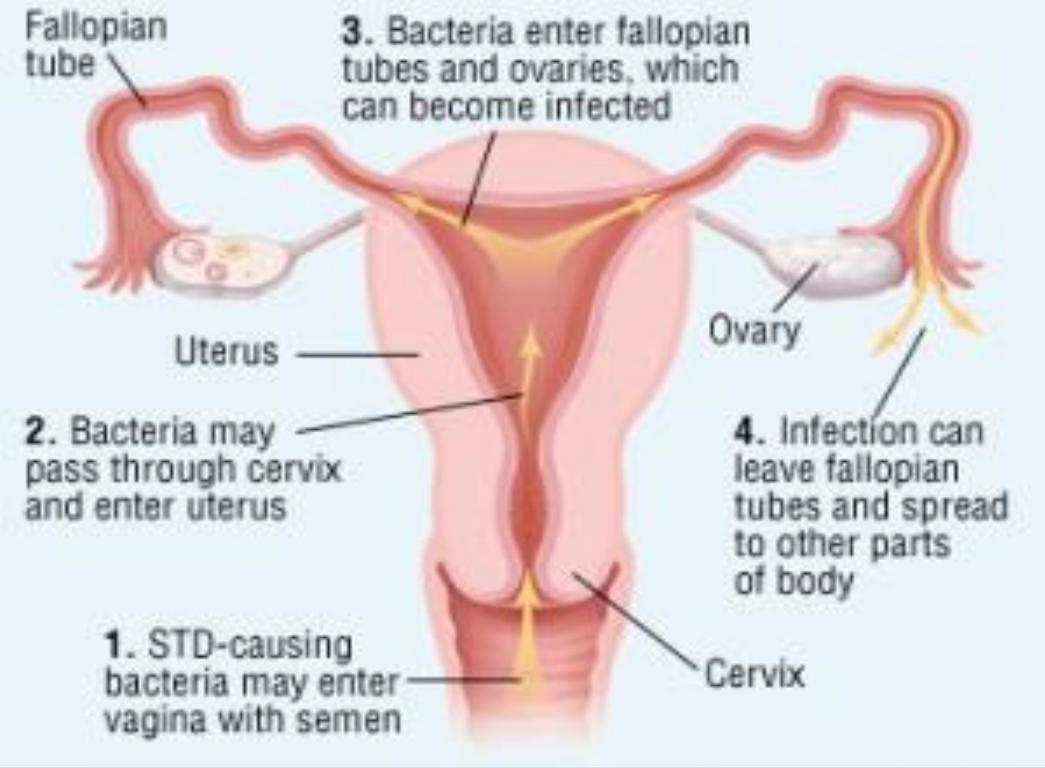
Age 40
45,000 (3%)

*These numbers represent averages. The actual number of a woman's egg supply will vary from woman to woman.

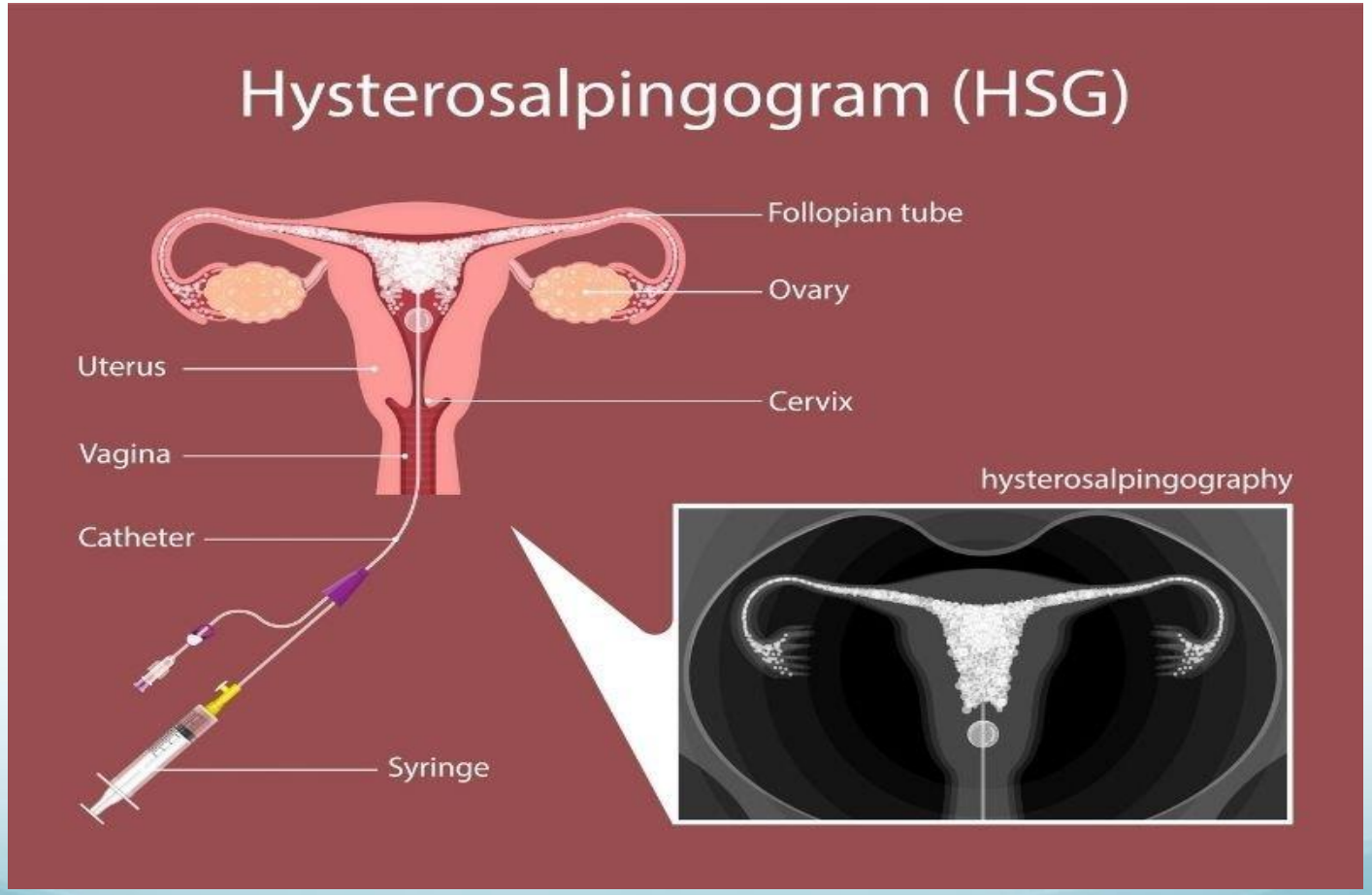
Female Infertility Causes

- 4) damage to the fallopian tubes- this may occur from a history of pelvic infections like gonorrhoea, chlamydia as well as endometriosis.
- In most instances damaged fallopian tubes may only be detected with the use of specialised ultrasound, Xray or laparoscopic procedures.

Fallopian Damage



HSG


Hysterosalpingogram (HSG)
Follopian tube
Ovary
Uterus
Cervix
Vagina
Catheter
Syringe
hysterosalpingography

What to do?

- Couples should visit their gynaecologist.
- A full work up will include medical history, physical examination, pelvic ultrasound, hormonal blood tests and semen analysis.
- Invasive procedures like laparoscopy may also be done to identify and rectify disease entities like endometriosis.

What To Do?

Fertility Specialists and Clinics

Fertility doctors and centers **specialize in human reproduction** to help couples struggling with conception successfully get pregnant.

SPECIALIST

A medical doctor with a subspecialty in **reproductive endocrinology and infertility**



CLINIC

A medical facility that is equipped to treat **female and male cases of infertility**



WHAT SERVICES



- Infertility counseling
- Fertility tests
- Infertility treatment
- Assisted reproductive technologies (ARTs)

WHEN TO SEE

When a woman has:

- Not conceived for 12 (<35yo) or 6 months (>35yo)
- Irregular periods & ovulation problems
- Endometriosis & PCOS
- Repeated miscarriages

HOW TO CHOOSE



- Take your time
- Research your options
- Schedule a visit
- Be selective

www.shecares.com

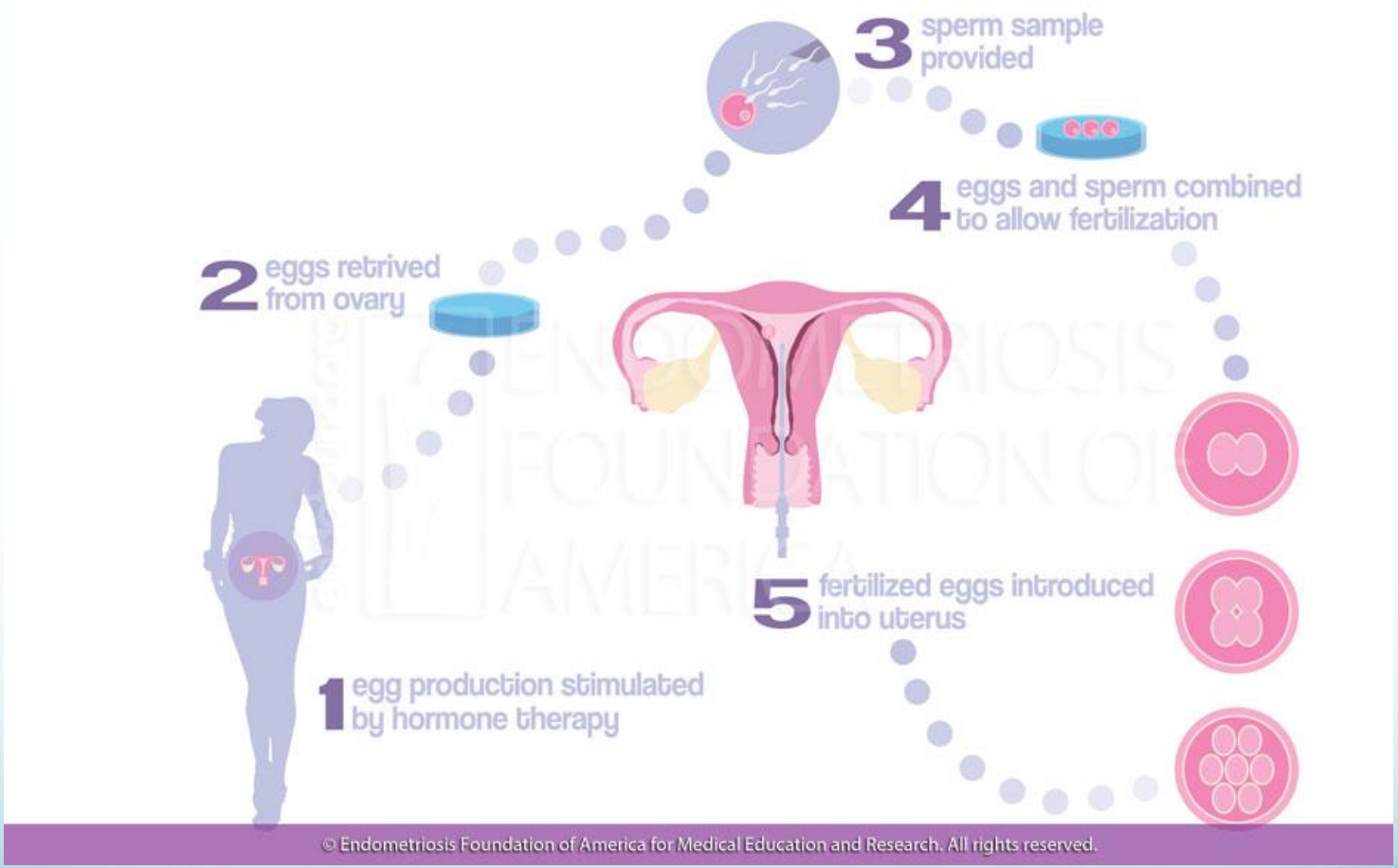
Infertility Management

- 1) lifestyle modification includes exercise, weight loss or gain, stress management and supplementation of folic acid.
- 2) drugs like clomiphene citrate and femara are administered to improve ovulation.
- 3) invasive procedures like Intrauterine Insemination or invitro insemination are only considered when all else has failed.

Lifestyle Modification



Artificial Insemination



Take Home Message

- Infertility is a common gynaecological problem.
- It has both male and female components.
- Couples need to seek medical help following an average of one year without pregnancy.
- Treatment is individualised according to patient needs.
- Never fear to seek help as knowledge is power!