Intralipid Infusion – Patient Information

Intralipid infusion therapy is a sterile 20% fat emulsion, composed of 10% soybean oil, 1.2% egg yolk phospholipids, 2.25% glycerine and water. Intralipid infusions provide the body with essential fatty acids that help lower the activity of Natural Killer (NK) cells. The infusion is in liquid form and administered intravenously.  It is a non invasive procedure carried out in clinic as part of a treatment cycle.

**Why is it used?**

Research has found that raised natural killer cell activity (toxic white blood cells) or high levels of cytokines (TH1:TH2) can act against an embryo and prevent its implantation into the endometrium.  This is known as implantation failure. In addition, some auto immune disorders can also have a detrimental impact upon the healthy implantation and early progress of an embryo which can also cause implantation failure and early miscarriage. Your consultant may recommend intralipid therapy in order to combat these factors.

**Who may benefit from intralipid therapy?**

Intralipid infusions can help women who have high levels of naturall killer cell activity, had previous implantation failure or early miscarriage/s.  Treatment is available for women as part of a treatment cycle at Harley Street Fertility Clinic or women having treatment elsewhere in the UK or overseas. For further information about our miscarriage and implantation failure service please contact us. We also recommend that patients refer to the regulator’s web page regarding treatment “add-ons” for further information: <https://www.hfea.gov.uk/treatments/explore-all-treatments/treatment-add-ons/>

**When is the best time to have the infusions?**

Your consultant will discuss the timing of the infusions with you and re-testing to see if your natural killer cell activity has gone down.

**How are the infusions carried out?**

As the intralipid is in liquid form it is administered by inserting a cannula (a fine plastic tube) into a vein in the arm or hand.  Each infusion takes around an hour and a half during which the you will be seated comfortably and in private.  You may eat and drink normally whilst the infusion is taking place and a clinical team member will monitor you throughout the appointment.

**Are there any noticeable effects or other risks of the infusion?**

There are no serious adverse effects with the infusion although some patients may experience a headache, nausea or flu-like symptoms.  The infusion is not given to anyone with a known allergy to soy oil, eggs, peanut, peanut based products or any active ingredients in the infusion. After the infusion you can resume normal activities such as driving.

Intralipid is increasingly being prescribed to women undergoing IVF and those with a history of recurrent miscarriage.  However, there are no published randomised controlled trials assessing its efficacy. Furthermore, use of intralipid for immunological issues in fertility patients is off license: intralipid was originally designed for parenteral nutrition. The potential risks and side effects of sepsis and hypercoagulation have been identified with intralipid therapy.  In addition, the carcinogenic and mutagenic potential of Intralipid has not been assessed.  There have been no animal studies of the use of Intralipid and it is not known whether Intralipid can cause fetal harm when administered to a pregnant woman or can affect her reproductive capacity.

**What is included in the cost?**

A charge is payable for each intralipid infusion. Any other fertility investigations, treatment or preservation services for either partner are not included in this charge.