

Lister Fertility Clinic Dietetic Service FAQs

Do I need to meet a dietitian?

It is no secret nutrition is one of the strong pillars of your fertility and pregnancy pathway - irrespective of whether or not you decide to use fertility treatments. This does not necessarily mean there is a "special diet" for improving fertility as we see advertised across the media. In most cases, following the Eat well plate will be enough to ensure nutritional adequacy.

So, the question is, when would meeting a dietitian be of benefit?

1) Conflicting Information available

There is a vast array of conflicting information regarding fertility and diet available out there to anyone with access to a search engine. If you are not sure whether what you are doing is adequate, or you want to make sure the special diet/ herb/ supplement you have been recommended won't do more harm than good; you can discuss this with a Dietitian, the only diet and nutrition experts to be regulated by the Health and Care Professional Council (HCPC).

2) Confounding Factors

If you have any of the following conditions, it can affect your nutritional intake, absorption and metabolism. Getting a dietitian referral will help manage your condition and your pregnancy plan with a lot more clarity and ease.

- Coeliac Disease
- Polycystic Ovary Disease
- Diabetes/ Strong family history of diabetes
- Food allergy/ Intolerance
- Inflammatory bowel disease/ malabsorption

3) Weight Management

We are all aware that the right BMI range does help improve your chances to higher implantation rates and reduced miscarriage rates. We are here to support your plan and ensure you get there safely.

My BMI is not in the recommended range - what do I do?

In a perfect world we could get back to that range but we have to be realistic. It is important to understand that BMI is only a range, and improving your current situation by just 5-10% towards your ideal weight helps to optimise your hormones. So even a couple of kilos over the few weeks as you plan your fertility treatments will help. We will use evidence-based methods to reach your goals in an effective manner.

How early should I start?

Nutritional changes made from conception to the first two years of the child are integral as they have an influence on the new-born's genes throughout their lifespan. We call it the 1000 days window.

The time required for weight change is individualised, discuss with our dietitian if you are in doubt of how to plan efficiently. We recommend that the earlier you can start your plan the better, but any steps you can take at any point throughout your fertility treatment will be beneficial.

Why trust a dietitian, rather than a nutrition expert in high street?

It is easy these days to complete a weekend course and call yourself a diet expert. As nutrition is such an important part of both your fertility and pregnancy journey, its best to rely on someone qualified.

	Regulated by Law	Qualifications	Check Register	Treatment
Dietitian	✓ Regulated by Health and Care Professional Council (HCPC)	✓ Curriculum in accordance to British Dietetic Association (BDA)	It's possible to check on hcpc-uk.org	Evidence Based Medical Nutrition Therapy
Nutritionist	Voluntary registration UKVRN	Checked by AFN	AFN website	Non clinical settings
Nutrition therapist	x	x	x	x
Diet Expert	x	x	x	x