

## Performing the embryo transfer: a guideline

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A systematic review of the literature was conducted which examined each of the major steps of embryo transfer. Recommendations made for improving pregnancy rates are based on interventions demonstrated to be either beneficial or not beneficial. (Fertil Steril® 2017;107:882–96. ©2017 by American Society for Reproductive Medicine.)

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This article looks at all the factor and/or interventions that have an impact on the outcome of the embryo transfer within the IVF arena.

The take home message is as follows:

1. Practices that definitely help INCREASE outcome
  - i. Embryo transfer should occur using ultrasound guidance. This means your specialist should be scanning your uterus while doing the transfer.
  - ii. A 'soft' transfer catheter delivers the best results
  - iii. Bed rest is NOT recommended after transfer.
  
2. Practices that helped improve results but not significantly.
  - i. Acupuncture
  - ii. Removal of cervical mucus at the time of transfer
  - iii. Placement of the catheter and embryo deposition affects outcome
    1. Deposition need to occur more than 1cm from the top of the uterus
  - iv. Removing the catheter immediately after transfer is recommended
  - v. If an embryo stays behind in the catheter but then immediately transferred again then outcome is not affected.
  
3. Practices that do not help!!
  - i. Antibiotic treatment before or after transfer
  - ii. Powdered gloves used during transfer do not affect outcome
  - iii. Anaesthesia does not improve outcome (or reduce it)
  - iv. Massage therapy will not improve outcome
  - v. Chinese medicine will not improve outcome
  - vi. Waiting after expulsion of the embryos to remove the catheter will not improve outcome