

## Your questions answered

### Erection Problems Clinic



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### Ask the Doctor

with *Dr. Leonard Condren* of *irishhealth.com*

#### Infertility - significance of the MAR test?

Can you tell me if my husband's "positive MAR test" would definitely stop me getting pregnant?

#### The Doctor says...

The acronym MAR stands for mixed antiglobulin reaction. The test is used to diagnose immunological infertility, which means that antisperm antibodies are present that prevent conception from taking place. Antibodies in blood, semen or cervical mucous coat the surface of the sperm, which impairs sperm transport and ultimately fertilisation of the ovum. A diagnosis of immunological infertility is probable when 50% or more of the mobile sperm have antibody attached to them. However it is still possible to conceive assuming that there are no other abnormalities within the semen. Steroids may be helpful by lowering antibody levels and temporarily increasing the odds of conception occurring. Intra-uterine insemination is another treatment option that can be attempted. This involves the insertion of specially prepared sperm in the uterus having previously given medication to the female partner to induce ovulation or egg release. IVF is a further method that has also been successfully used to overcome the difficulties of antisperm antibodies being present. Therefore it is possible to conceive despite the presence of these antibodies but this is unlikely to happen without the assistance of modern reproductive technology.

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