

SARS-COV-2 and assisted reproduction: an update in 2022



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The COVID-19 pandemic and its impact upon ART staff and services for patients have evolved since the last statement by the ESHRE COVID-19 working group (1,2). New SARS-CoV-2 variants with a different profile of infectivity and disease severity have become dominant and vaccination has been offered in all EU countries to both staff and patients, with excellent uptake in most of them. A return to the pre-COVID-19 normality is not yet in sight (3).

ESHRE previous statements and recommendations with regards to triage and testing have restricted applicability at present apart from their historic and educational value detailing the response to a progressive global emergency (1,2,4,5).

To maintain safe ART practices, ESHRE recommends that services follow regional and country-specific guidance and/or good clinical practice with regards to SARS-CoV-2 testing (PCR testing and others). Protective measures should be commensurate with the stage of the pandemic and medical recommendations from national and local health authorities.

With regards to vaccination, ESHRE recommends that, if available, men and women attempting to conceive through assisted reproduction receive the COVID-19 vaccine before starting treatment or at any time during the fertility treatment or pregnancy.

ESHRE recommends that access to fertility services to men and women should not depend on the availability of COVID-19 vaccines, nor on the personal decision of individual patients about vaccination.

References

1. SARS-COV-2 and service adaptation: an update (publication date 08 June 2021) (<https://www.eshre.eu/Home/COVID19WG>)
2. COVID-19 vaccination and assisted reproduction (publication date 08 June 2021) (<https://www.eshre.eu/Home/COVID19WG>)
3. European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control. Maps in support of the Council Recommendation on a coordinated approach to travel measures in the EU. Available via <https://www.ecdc.europa.eu/en/covid-19/situation-updates/weekly-maps-coordinated-restriction-free-movement>.
4. ART and COVID-19 A Statement from ESHRE. Phase 2: ESHRE guidance document on recommencing ART. (publication date 23 April 2020) (<https://www.eshre.eu/Press-Room/ESHRE-News#COVID19P2>)
5. ART and COVID-19 A Statement from ESHRE. Phase 3: Safe ART services during the third phase of the COVID-19 pandemic. (publication date: 14 October 2020) (<https://www.eshre.eu/Press-Room/ESHRE-News#guidoct20>)

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