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LIVE it

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Amanda's IVF Diary: PART 2



IN a moving diary published in The Sun two months ago, Amanda Reveall Walton described her IVF experiences as she and 45-year-old mechanic husband Paul, pictured with her below, who is fighting cancer, tried for a baby after being diagnosed with unexplained infertility.

Amanda, 41, from Swindon, was then four weeks into her second cycle of treatment. Here, she updates us with the latest chapter of her story.

I STARTED TO BELIEVE THAT THIS TIME IT COULD HAPPEN

I KNEW the IVF rollercoaster ride would be "stomach-in-mouth" stuff, and I knew what I was letting myself in for.

The procedure had gone so much more smoothly than the last time. No pain. After the op to retrieve my eggs, the embryologist rang to say three of them had fertilised. Two days later, we returned to the Oxford Fertility Unit to be told that one of the eggs was a grade B. This is about as good as it gets for an egg produced through IVF.

I think it was at that point that Paul and I really started to believe that this time it could happen. We even jokingly started to talk about names of children beginning with B.

Even "The 2WW" (the two-week wait to find out if I was pregnant) didn't seem as horrendous.

I was full of hope and really felt this time the best embryo (which in my head I'd started calling Little B) would take. But three days before I was due to do the pregnancy test, I started bleeding.

At that moment all our dreams died. It has now been a week since that sad day and as yet I have not cried.

Perhaps I've become too hardened after more than four years of trying to get pregnant and two cycles of IVF.

Or perhaps it's because I just don't want to be sad. When someone you love has cancer, you truly understand the saying "Life is short".

It leaves you with a desire to enjoy every minute you have been blessed with, and that's what I intend to do.

Paul and I might not have been able to create a new life, but the life we have together is just as precious.



WE HELP THREE 'COSMETICS ADDICTS



GEMMA MATTHEWS, 32

PA and events organiser Gemma lives in Reading, Berkshire, with husband Jonathan (31), a credit manager. She says:

I have drawers full of half-used or new products. I buy things on two-for-one deals and consign one to the drawer and forget about it.

I usually spend about £50 a month but I've spent up to £120 in one go. Sometimes I feel guilty about what I buy. I also worry about wrinkles - I've had lots of sunny holidays.

And I've got broken veins around my nose so I use creams to relieve the redness.

DR PATRICK SAYS: With Gemma's skin type, sun protection is very important. In the morning she needs a moisturiser with a sunscreen. In the evening she should try vitamin A or vitamin C to slow skin ageing. A healthy diet and water will help, too. A night cream with vitamin A or vitamin E and retinol brands every three months would be a good idea.

TRY: Superdrug Vitamin E Illuminating Moisture Cream (£2.99) and Body Shop Vitamin C Intensive Night Treatment (£12.50).

How to beauty

BEFORE buying that new "dream cream", do you wonder if you already own a similar one? New research shows British women have more than 50 million skin products they will never use. More than half of women polled - 55 per cent - admitted having one such product. And a study for The Body Shop's Nutraganics range shown the average woman spends almost

CLARE WATKINS, 23

CHILDREN'S nurse Clare, from Tamworth, Staffs, is single. She says:

When I start shopping for skin products there's no stopping me. I scare myself later when I see I've spent £50.

The most I spent at once is £20. I can't afford it on a nurse's wage.

I have a set skin routine. My skin is oily so I use a face wash to clean it, toner to close my pores and then moisturise.

I use an eye cream to reduce dark circles from nights spent working on the wards and I also hope this will be anti-ageing. Before I put on my make-up I use a beauty flash balm to make my skin appear more even.

I am in search of products that work for my sensitive skin. I'm always trying to prevent spots.

I can spend £30 on a product that I'll swan because it brought me out in a rash. I've got combination skin so it can be painfully dry and it's a never-ending search to find a moisturiser that isn't so heavy it brings me out in spots. I like products

