

Test tube baby: an option for childless couple



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Infertility is the inability of a couple to become pregnant. An advancement in the field of medicine has been used recently which helps childless couple to have their biological child. This advancement includes what the people call in vitro fertilization which results to what is commonly known as the test tube baby. In Vitro Fertilization (IVF) is the most common among the high-tech fertility treatments. It can help the woman conceive if she has ovulatory problems, if they have problems in the fallopian tubes, if their partner has low sperm count, or other fertility treatments are unsuccessful.

It is an assisted reproductive technology (ART) where in one or more eggs are fertilized not in uterus but outside of the female's body. Its result is often called the " test tube baby". There are other techniques that can be used as an option such as Gamete Intrafallopian transfer and Zygote Intrafallopian transfer but In Vitro fertilization has better results. This paper presents the discussion on In vitro Fertilization as an option for childless couple in seven parts. The first part provides a brief overview of In Vitro Fertilization. The second discusses other assisted reproduction technology.

It is followed by how the treatment is done. Then, it mentions about the possible risks involve in undergoing the treatment. The next part cites the success rates of treatments. The church objections are then talk about on the following part. The final part presents the interview with an Obstetrics Gynecology with regards to her views and opinions towards the fertility treatments. These parts of the paper will support our stand that In Vitro Fertilization is better than Gamete Intrafallopian Transfer and Zygote Intrafallopian Transfer as an infertility treatment for the couple to have their biological child.

Test Tube Baby is the common term used for In Vitro Fertilization. “ ‘ In Vitro’ is Latin for ‘ in glass,’ a reference to the Petri dish used in this method of treating infertility. ” It is a medical process for “ fertilizing human eggs outside of a woman’s body” (In Vitro Fertilization widely used. Church condemns practice that has accounted 300, 000 births worldwide)). IVF is a method of assisted reproduction where the gametes meet inside a “ laboratory dish” where the fertilization occurs. When the fertilization is successful, the embryo will then be transferred to the mother’s womb for development.

The result of this process or techniques is often called the test tube baby. IVF is an artificial process that gives hope to childless couple that they can still have a child of their own (Garcia). This kind of fertility treatment has been used widely in “ animal embryological research” for years but it was effectively “ applied to human reproduction” during the late 70’s (In Vitro Fertilization (IVF)). IVF was first applied to animals and later developed to humans in the United Kingdom. A lot of problems and objections were faced by many doctors who practice this kind of treatment.

Others even committed suicide due to the dispute of their government. IVF detonated in fame when it became successful in the United States in the year 1981 (In Vitro Fertilization). “ Advisable for IVF are women with irreparably damaged tubes,...and male factor infertility. ” IVF will be also the remedy such as oligospermia, major cervical mucus hostility factors and another specific unexplained infertility (Test Tube Baby). Also, those who can benefit from IVF are “ women with problems in the uterus.... ”, women with “ problems in the ovaries” like “ polycystic ovarian syndrome.... Etc. , “ women

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with problems in the fallopian tubes, or tubal ligation...". Those who have "genetic diseases that result in miscarriage or abnormal births", "men with vasectomy.. , or with problems of the tubes due to infections,..., not solved surgically", "male with low sperm counts or motility", "infertility secondary to sperm antibodies", and "unexplained infertility that has not responded to other treatments" can also benefit from in vitro fertilization (In Vitro Fertilization). Test tube baby is done to partners who have irregularities in their respective organ.

Such if both of the fallopian tubes of the female partner are blocked and she is suffering severe endometriosis and if the male partner has a very small count of sperm cells. Its egg and sperm cells are taken and will soon be mixed. Both partners don't require any hospital stay because there is no operation. Only the female is given injections and capsule of progesterone for the eggs taken from her (Test Tube Baby). Other than In Vitro Fertilization there are still other Assisted Reproductive Technology (ART) methods that are suitable for couples with infertility problems.

Assisted Reproductive Technology has produced an astonishing number of live births in the face of condemnation of the Catholic Church and the criticisms of lawyers and ethicists in its current practice. Gamete intrafallopian transfer (GIFT), Zygote intrafallopian transfer (ZIFT), and Intra Cytoplasmic Sperm Injection (ICSI) are few of the techniques related to IVF. GIFT is most likely to IVF, but the fertilization process is done in the fallopian tube and not in the laboratory, and the sex cells gathered from the couple are not transferred to the uterus but to the fallopian tube.

On the other hand, the fertilization process under ZIFT occurs in the laboratory and not in the fallopian tube. The fertilized egg is then transferred to the fallopian tube. Both procedures involve laparoscopic surgical procedure in transferring the gametes into the fallopian tube (In Vitro Fertilization: IVF). GIFT is a fertility treatment referred to couples, who have normal fallopian tube and good sperm count, that cannot be pregnant. It is the only fertility treatment that is accepted by the Roman Catholic Church.

In this kind of treatment, the reproductive cells of the couple are “washed and placed via a catheter directly into the woman’s fallopian tubes”. This process allows the fertilized egg to travel to the uterus for implantation in a natural way. “In contrast, the IVF places the fertilized egg directly into the uterus”. One benefit of GIFT is that this kind of treatment “relies to a far greater degree on the body's natural processes and timetable to produce pregnancy, and is acceptable to those religious groups which avoid the more embryo invasive technologies”. GIFT (Gamete Intra-Fallopian Transfer)). On the other hand, ZIFT is initiated by receiving prescriptions that will help your egg follicles develop. Before the body impulsively discharges the eggs, a doctor will recover them while you are under the influence of anesthesia. These eggs are then combined with the partner’s sperms and leave overnight to fertilize. The eggs that have been fertilized are then moved back to the woman’s body through laparoscopy (Zygote Intrafallopian Transfer). Another ART method, which is the best known type, is in vitro fertilization.

It is usually the first thing that will cross our mind if we think about infertility treatment. Due to this fact, a lot of people think that IVF is their only

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treatment option if they have infertility problems (In Vitro Fertilization). It is a plausible choice of action for couples with diverse types of infertility. At first, its purpose is only for women whose fallopian tubes are blocked, damaged, or absent. But nowadays, it is also applicable for circumvent infertility caused by endometriosis or by any infertility problem of the male partner.

It is also used for those who have unexplained reasons of infertility (In Vitro Fertilization). In ICSI, the eggs are retrieved same as with the IVF, only the eggs and the sperm are fertilized in the laboratory by a direct injection of a single sperm with each egg. After 3 days, the embryos are placed into the uterus without surgery like IVF (Intra Cytoplasmic Sperm Injection). There are risks that can be faced by a woman in undergoing IVF. One risk is affecting the hormone and may give rise to cancer.

Some theories try to explain the connection of fertilization treatment with the risk of particular type of cancer. Affecting the hormone, such as the estrogen and progesterone, level can give rise to hormone related cancer such as the breast cancer and womb cancer. As time pass and we become more advance in terms of technology, cancer risks related to infertility treatment also decreases. There are times that unexplained infertility is more prone in having cancer than those who undergo fertility treatment (Does " test tube baby" treatment increase cancer risk? . Another risk that can possibly occur is the ovarian hyper stimulation syndrome. There are some potential risks with most medical processes. The risks involve in having a test tube baby " depends upon each specific step of the procedure". " Ovary stimulation carries the risk of hyper stimulation...". " " Ovarian Hyper Stimulation Syndrome'" is a condition which is " usually rare, mild, and

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involves the following potential side effects: nausea, vomiting, lack of appetite, or feeling of being bloated. " " More severe symptoms occur in 1% of cases. This includes " severe abdominal pain, severe nausea or vomiting, decreased urinary frequency, dark-colored urine, shortness of breath, ten pounds weight gain within three to five days. " (In Vitro Fertilization). The success rate of every treatment depends upon the center where it is done. In one site in the internet the success rate of the three treatments are present which will be used for the discussion in this paper. The success rate for IVF changes significantly. It usually depends on the situation of the couple and their ages also matter. Younger woman usually have healthier eggs and higher success rates. " Women who will undergo IVF have the average of 28% that they can bear a child with each series of treatment (Fertility Treatment: In Vitro Fertilization (IVF)). Same goes with GIFT and ZIFT. The success of each treatment varies depending on the condition of the patient. For GIFT, there is an average of 21% possibility that the woman can conceive a child (Fertility Treatment: Gamete Intrafallopian Transfer (GIFT)). On the other hand, 26% is the average possibility that a patient can have her baby if she went through the ZIFT type of in vitro. Fertility Treatment: Zygote Intrafallopian Transfer (ZIFT)). Despite of the happiness that the process, known as In vitro Fertilization (IVF), can give to a hopeless couple, the Roman Catholic Church has still something to say about it. The Roman Catholic Church disagree to IVF and suggests couples that infertility is a call from God to adopt children but GIFT is accepted because fertilization takes place inside the body. According to them, having IVF "'infringe[s] the child's right to be born of a father and mother known to him and bound to each other by marriage'".

This process is unacceptable for Catholics and other human beings with great faith and sees embryos as a living organism (In Vitro Fertilization). But, the Vatican does not oppose to fertility drugs and even approves the GIFT type of infertility treatment with one condition, the sperm cells must be accumulated during the intercourse by means of a perforated condom rather than through masturbation. The church approves this kind of infertility treatment because the fertilization occurs inside the body (In Vitro Fertilization widely used. (Church condemns practice that has accounted 300, 000 births worldwide)).

In an interview conducted, Dr. Hope Lorena Go, M. D. shared to the researchers that the most common type of infertility that she encountered is that the woman is unovulatory meaning they do not ovulate. There are two factors to take into account which are the female factor and the male factor. They, the doctors, do not really refer in vitro fertilization directly to their patients due to the reality that the treatment is very expensive. They are not the one who makes a decision as to what treatment the patients should undergo. It is the centers who are performing the treatment that will come to a decision.

What they can do is to diagnose where the problem lies. In terms of risk, she imparted to the researchers that it is not high because it is less invasive compared to the conventional open method. She also said that they cannot verify the success of every treatment because it's really up to the condition of the patient and also the specialty of the center. With regards to the church objection, our proponent's opinion about the matter is that the church is

being firm with their perception on family planning and life that it should be natural.

As what the researcher's proponent imparted to them that the success of the treatment depends on the situation of the patient and the specialty of the centers, they conclude that in vitro fertilization is a better option than Gamete Intrafallopian transfer and Zygote Intrafallopian transfer base on the figures and information gathered which were discussed in this paper. In Vitro fertilization treatment is a more reliable option for the couples to have a biological son or daughter rather than the Gamete Intrafallopian Transfer and the Zygote Intrafallopian Transfer.

In Vitro Fertilization can be an option no matter what is the infertility problem of the couple whether it is because of the woman being unovulatory or her tubes are obstructed or the male has low sperm count. References Does 'test tube baby' treatment increase cancer risk?. <http://www.cancerhelp.org.uk/help/default.asp?page=5086> (21 Nov. 2007). Fertility Treatment: Gamete Intrafallopian Transfer (GIFT). http://www.babycenter.com/0_fertility-treatment-gamete-intrafallopian-transfer-gift_4095.bc?articleId=4095=2#articlesection1. 31 January, 2008) Fertility Treatment: In Vitro Fertilization (IVF). http://www.babycenter.com/0_fertility-treatment-in-vitro-fertilization-ivf_4094.bc?articleId=4094=2#articlesection1. (20 February, 2008) Fertility Treatment: Zygote Intrafallopian Transfer (ZIFT). http://www.babycenter.com/0_fertility-treatment-zygote-intrafallopian-transfer-zift_4096.bc. (31 January, 2008) Garcia, Jairo E. M. D. (2005). In Vitro Fertilization. http://www.emedicinehealth.com/in_vitro_fertilization/article_em.htm (02 Dec. 2007). GIFT (Gamete Intra-
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