



# INFERTILITY

Facts, Causes,  
Prevention and  
Solutions

# Imprint

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By Victory A.R.T. Laboratory Phils, Inc.

These articles were compiled from <http://www.ivfvictoryphilippines.com/> in hopes of helping bring into light infertility questions and bring solutions for many couples and / individuals having a hard time conceiving.

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**Victory A.R.T. Laboratory Phils, Inc.** is part of the Hong Kong based Victory Group of A.R.T. Laboratories and is the pioneer IVF laboratory here in the Philippines. Established in and spearheaded by **Dr. Gregorio Pastorfide**, a re-knowned and internationally acclaimed OB-GYN, Victory continues to assist and provide infertility solutions using state-of-the-art equipment and an ever-growing and adapting medical team.

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# Table of Contents



## Facts on **Infertility** page5

Definition of infertility, types and numbers.



## **Infertility:** The Causes and How to Avoid it page7

Some causes and preventions against Infertility.



## Causes of Female **Infertility** page9

Here are some issues that you may consider asking your OB-GYN about.



## Men and **Infertility:** Symptoms and Treatments page12

How does one identify male infertility anyway? Here are some of the symptoms.



## **Assisted Reproductive Technology** Demystified page14

A number of varied methods are put in this classification, and these practices facilitate the couple in successfully making a baby.



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## Fertility Treatments For **Infertility** Problems **page16**

Thanks to medical advancements, there are several efficient and cost-effective treatments for fertility problems these days.



## Why Undergo **IVF** **page18**

Infertility is not all-encompassing. There are ways to alleviate or even cure it. One of which comes in the form of IVF, or In Vitro Fertilization.



## **In Vitro Fertilisation** 101: Getting Pregnant Made Easy **page20**

For all that they have been through together, conceiving a child is the greatest achievement that any couple can have.



## A Guy's Guide to **IVF** **page22**

Is it really true? Do women really deserve this much blame for such difficulty?



## Finding Success with **In Vitro Fertilization** **page24**

Infertility has been plaguing relationships for a very long time, so maybe it is time for people to give methods like IVF a chance. After all, there's no greater reward than being able to bring life to another person.



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# Facts on Infertility

Infertility is a dreaded term. It carries a certain sense of finality for couples having trouble getting pregnant, and is accompanied with dread or despair. But how do you know if you really are infertile? Here are some facts that may be useful in learning more about infertility.



**1. Definition of infertility.** Infertility is defined by the World Health Organization as the inability to conceive a child, particularly after two years of regular sexual intercourse without contraception. In the U.S., the failure to conceive bears special urgency for women past 35 years of age. Couples under 35 who have been unsuccessful

after one year of trying unprotected intercourse, or couples over 35 who have been unsuccessful after six months are defined as infertile.

**2. Primary vs. Secondary infertility.** Primary infertility refers to the inability to conceive for a couple that has never had a child. Secondary infertility is the failure to conceive following a previous pregnancy. The previous pregnancy in secondary infertility may or may not have resulted in birth.

**3. Prevalence:** As much as 7% of all couples worldwide have problems with fertility

**4. Common female causes of infertility** include hormonal problems, ovulation problems, malfunctioning fallopian tubes, infectious diseases, abdominal and pelvic surgeries, and advancing age. Your OB Gyn can help evaluate the cause of infertility, giving you a good chance to become pregnant.



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5. **Common male causes of infertility** include poor semen quality, low sperm count, and Primary Ciliary Dyskinesia, a disorder where the man's sperm are viable, yet immotile. A semen examination can be done to help determine the male cause of infertility.

6. **There are some rare cases** where each partner is fertile by mutual exclusivity; that is, they are independently fertile, but cannot conceive together.

7. **Rule of Thirds:** In approximately one-third of cases, the cause of infertility can be attributed to a disorder in the female. Male factors account for one-third as well, and another one-third of infertility cases are attributable to problems in both the male and female.

8. Even after extensive medical testing, the cause for 15% of infertility cases still remains unexplainable or unknown.

9. **Up to 90% of infertility cases** can be treated with surgical repair of damaged reproductive organs, or even simply medical treatment.

10. Nearly one million babies have been born as a result of in-vitro fertilization worldwide. Of the live births that have resulted from IVF, 50% have been singletons, 24% are twin births, and 5% are triplets.

Keeping these numbers, it also helps to seek the consult of a qualified OB GYN whom you can trust, and who can educate you further as you find solutions to your infertility. This would increase your chances of getting pregnant and having a family.



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# Infertility: The Causes and How to Avoid it

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Having a child is the most important part of the union between a man and woman. For them, sharing their love for each other to their children is the best feeling in the world. This is why many couples are always anticipating the time when their doctor inform them that they are going to have a baby soon.

However, sometimes getting pregnant is not as easy as most people think. In some cases, the wife or husband suffers from infertility problems. Infertility is a medical condition that prevents couples to conceive. What causes this problem? How to avoid it? Let's take a look.

## Causes of Infertility

Infertility is a condition that is suffered by millions of people around the world. It may be severe, but the condition can be treated. The person must find out why he or she became infertile in the first place.

- **Age**

As women get older, fewer eggs are produced. This also means that getting pregnant can be a challenge. Women who work at a young age may have problems conceiving once they reach 30. As important a career may be, it is also essential to prioritize one's future. Would you rather have a child or a great career?



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- **Medication**

Taking birth control pills can harm the reproductive system. Continuous use of these over-the-counter medications can lead to hormonal imbalance in the body, which may lead to infertility. This does not mean that you should avoid taking these pills. Instead, it should be taken in moderation, or only as advised by a medical professional.

- **Diet**

You are what you eat. Foods with too many preservatives can have a negative effect on your reproductive system. Apart from that, unhealthy food can cause other health issues like high cholesterol, diabetes and many more.

## How to Avoid Infertility

Starting a family and having children is one of the most exciting times in one's life. Would you allow infertility to rob you of that chance? There are several ways you can do to avoid it. Here are some tips:

- **Be healthy**

You must be healthy in order to have a pregnancy without complications, but it is at your best interest to stay in shape to live longer. Always keep track of your Body Mass Index or BMI. Being overweight can also cause fertility problems.

- **Know your body**

Is your body ready for pregnancy? It might be a reason why you are having difficulty to getting pregnant. For instance, bigger women have higher chances to get pregnant than a smaller woman. You also need to consider your family history since genetics play a big role with regard to pregnancy.

- **Consult your doctor**

The best treatment is always the pre-emptive one. Consult your OB-Gyne and have yourself examined regularly. Regular check-ups will not guarantee you immunity over fertility problems, but your doctor can advise you on how to keep yourself healthy and ready for pregnancy.



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# Causes of Female Infertility

When you and your partner have been unsuccessful in getting pregnant, at some point you've wondered what went wrong. There may be several factors leading to your inability to become pregnant. Here are some issues that you may consider asking your OB-GYN about.

## Failure to Ovulate (Anovulation)

Disorders in ovulation are considered among the most common reasons why women fail to conceive. These can be categorized according to their underlying causes:



**1. Hormonal problems.** These are the most common causes of anovulation. The process of ovulation depends on the successful interactions between hormones, and any disruption in their balance can make ovulation difficult. Among such problems are the following:

**a. Failure to produce mature ova:** This means that the ovaries are unable to produce normal follicles where the eggs can mature. If the ova are not mature, then there is no ovulation. This is seen in diseases such as polycystic ovarian syndrome, where there is a reduced production of FSH, and normal or increased levels of LH, estrogen and testosterone.

**b. Malfunction of the hypothalamus:** The hypothalamus is responsible for triggering the pituitary gland to send FSH and LH to the ovaries to help the ova mature. Without the hypothalamus regulating this process, the maturation process is stunted.

**c. Malfunction of the pituitary gland:** the pituitary gland is the “middle man”



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in the hormonal cascade between the hypothalamus and the ovaries. The failure of the pituitary gland can be due to a chemical imbalance, pituitary tumor, or injury.

**2. Scarred Ovaries.** Ovaries are susceptible to physical damage, especially when the patient has undergone surgeries or has suffered infections. Also, ovarian cysts may lead to scarring, which means that the follicles cannot reach maturity.

**3. Follicle Problems and Premature Menopause.** These are rare disorders that have been documented as possible causes for anovulation.

## Malfunctioning Fallopian Tubes

Fallopian tube disorders account for 25% of infertility cases. Here are some important causes of tubal damage:

**1. Infection.** Sexually transmitted diseases can ascend within the female reproductive tract and into the fallopian tube. This leads to scarring or worse—hydrosalpinx is a complication of a fallopian tube infection when the tube itself is clogged with fluid.

**2. Abdominal diseases and previous surgeries.** Illnesses of any organ within the pelvic or abdominal cavity can affect the fallopian tube by proximity. Surgeries can often lead to postoperative adhesions, which can cause the fallopian tube to adhere to other surrounding tissues, thus affecting the path that the ova must travel.

**3. Ectopic Pregnancy.** Sometimes the fertilized ovum develops within the fallopian tube without ever reaching the uterus, causing tubal damage. This requires immediate surgical intervention.



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## Endometriosis

This is a condition in which cells that form the lining of the uterus grow and develop outside the uterine cavity. This development is influenced by changes in hormonal activity, and affects 10% of women.

## Additional Factors

Female infertility can also be caused by uterine disorders, and abnormalities in the cervical mucus. Both of these problems can be traced to hormonal imbalances.



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# Men and **Infertility**: Symptoms and Treatments

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## **Men and Infertility**

Always remember that pregnancy is a task for both couples. It does not merely rest on the woman. Men also play a big part when during conception. It is said the 40% of infertility cases are said to originate from women. The other 40 % is attributed to a low sperm count on men. The remaining 20% are due to unknown causes.

The numbers are there. When it comes to infertility, men should be given attention. The problem lies in identifying the problems. How does one identify male infertility anyway? Here are some of the symptoms.

### **Lack of sexual drive.**

Having a hard time getting an erection? Infertility in men can be traced with how they see sex in itself. Usually, a lack of sexual drive is caused by one's inability to give appropriate time for the deed. This can lead to a lot of problems other than infertility like failure to ejaculate or a smaller male organ.



### **Changes in the body.**

Dull skin and enlarged breast tissues are some of the signs of infertility for men. It is important that you take note of these. They may not have anything to do with your sex organ, but they are still major symptoms.



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### **Failed attempts in getting your partner pregnant.**

The prognosis is that if you can't impregnate your woman within six months, then there is a problem. There are several factors that can attribute to this like stress and work schedule. However, it is important to consult a doctor to determine whether it is a case of infertility or simply stress effects.

### **How to Treat Infertility**

If you have the symptoms, it is best that you do something about them immediately. The earlier you handle the issue, the higher the chances of getting better.

### **Use male enhancement products.**

You may be lacking in a bit of push. Male enhancement products can help improve your sex drive among other things. Just make sure that you use products that are safe and won't have any side effects.

### **Change your lifestyle.**

Drinking and smoking may also cause infertility. Men are more prone to these types of unhealthy lifestyle. It is important to avoid or even lessen your alcohol, drug or cigarette use. Eating healthy foods rich in minerals and vitamins can also help avoid infertility problems.

### **Consult your doctor first.**

Consulting your doctor will help you understand exactly what is going on. Your symptoms may be due to infertility, or it could be due to other medical condition. Either way, your doctor can identify the issue and advice you on the best remedy.



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# Assisted Reproductive Technology

## Demystified

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Assisted Reproductive Technology (ART) is a medical procedure designed to aid infertile couples who are attempting to conceive a child. A number of varied methods are put in this classification, and these practices facilitate the couple in successfully making a baby.



Infertility can be caused by different factors. One of the most common causes of women is sterile fallopian tubes. For males, the lack of enough sperm to fertilize a female egg is a possible reason. Statistics show that Assisted Reproductive Technology had a part in the successful birth of at least 30,000 babies every year.

### In-Vitro Fertilization (IVF)

This medical procedure is one of the most popular fertility solutions used by infertile couples with a success rate range of 25-35% per cycle. This method requires the woman to take fertility drugs for a few days. This will help her body will produce a lot of eggs, and increase the chances of getting pregnant. She will also be given extra medication to prepare her body for the treatment.

Next step is to extract the eggs and put in a sterile dish together with the male sperm to facilitate fertilization. Once it is fertilized, the egg is then placed in the uterus to continue the natural reproductive process.



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## Gamete Intrafallopian Transfer (GIFT)

Gamete Intrafallopian Transfer can be used apart from IVF to improve the success rate of couples getting pregnant. The In-Vitro Fertilization runs its course as usual, but the sperm and eggs are not mixed together. Instead of placing the fertilized eggs in the uterus, they are placed in the fallopian tubes. This shares the same rates of success as IVF, with around 24% every cycle and every couple.

## ZIFT

This type of Assisted Reproductive Technology is basically the combination of GIFT and IVF. The usual IVF method is applied until the part where the eggs and sperm are extracted. The sperm and eggs are now allowed to interact with each other before the mix is injected inside the fallopian tubes. This procedure normally offers the highest success rate of all the practices with a standard of 29%.

## Embryo Cryopreservation

In this process, the female has fresh eggs extracted and frozen for use in a future cycle. This is often used in case the earlier attempts to get pregnant fails. It allows couples to try the procedure the second time without having to undergo the whole IVF process again.



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# Fertility Treatments For **Infertility** Problems

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As women continue to age, the risk of miscarriage goes up, and the possibility of bearing a child lowers. These infertility problems are caused by several factors: heredity, medical history, physical condition, and age. The good news is that some of these health ailments can easily be remedied depending on the elements that are causing the medical issue.

It is no surprise that some couples are hesitant to choose a fertility treatment. Apart from the fact that these methods can be costly, couples also have to invest in a significant amount of time to conceive a child.

Thanks to medical advancements, there are several efficient and cost-effective treatments for fertility problems these days. Here are some examples:

## **Male Infertility**

Male infertility can stem from a deficient reproductive system. Examples of these infertility problems involve premature ejaculation and impotence.

This medical condition can also occur when the male is unable to generate or release enough sperm in the female fallopian tube to create a fertilized egg.

Treatment for this problem depends on the cause of the condition. The physician may suggest a



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hormone therapy or surgery to correct inadequate amounts of sperm. Other methods may involve sperm cryopreservation, microsurgical varicocele ligation, sperm procurement practices, or microsurgical vasectomy reversal among others.

## **Surgical infertility**

This may occur as a side effect of a recent surgical repair. Examples of these infertility problems include tuboplastics (the process of correcting deformed fallopian tubes), cystectomies (resecting ovarian cysts via surgery), and myomectomies (the removal of a tumor in the uterus) among others.

Treating this type of infertility problem will depend on the medical history of the patient. These methods usually apply assisted hatching, and Assisted reproductive technology (ART) like Intracytoplasmic sperm injection (ICSI), and In-Vitro Fertilization (IVF).

## **Tubal infertility**

These infertility problems keep the fertilized egg from reaching the uterus due to a blocked or broken fallopian tube. It may also occur at any time due to endometriosis, which occurs when there is an unusual buildup of tissue outside the abdominal organs, fallopian tubes, or the uterus cavity lining.

The physician will examine any possible risks before advising the patient to go through tubal surgery if she has endometriosis. Examples of tubal surgery involve laparoscopic surgery and sterilization reversal. If the fallopian tubes have been completely blocked by infertility problems, the physician may recommend IVF (In-Vitro Fertilization) instead of putting the patient at risk with major surgery.



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# Why Undergo **IVF**

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Infertility is a condition that can be depressing and devastating for couples. Both men and women are affected, and it puts a strain on the relationship. It can possibly destroy a lot of plans, hampering your chances of having a family. When the time comes and people want to settle down, infertility is a seemingly insurmountable obstacle. But can it be considered a final verdict?

The condition is not all-encompassing. There are ways to alleviate or even cure it. One of which comes in the form of IVF, or In Vitro Fertilization.



## **What is In Vitro Fertilization?**

Some medical experts may suggest IVF to couples who are having a difficult time conceiving. It is an artificial means of producing an embryo by combining the sperm cells and the egg cell outside of the body. Once the sperm and egg combine, the embryo is implanted

into the woman's uterus or into the fallopian tubes, and pregnancy is allowed to continue normally moving forward.

The treatment is suitable for nearly all couples with conception problems. Some of the cases that warrant this treatment include pelvic adhesions, dysfunctional fallopian tubes and low sperm count. IVF is also used extensively through different kinds of medical methods.



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## Why IVF?

In Vitro Fertilization is a breakthrough in the medical field whose benefits cannot be overstated. It has helped millions of people all over the world. In Vitro Fertilization will only continue to grow and be a suitable process for fertility as the years go by. If that's not enough, here are some of the reasons why IVF may be the right treatment for your case.

### When age and other priorities have gotten in the way

Upon establishing a career, you may have let go of your reproductive health a bit. Most infertility cases have occurred to people who are in their 30s. IVF can really help in giving couples another chance at pregnancy.

### For having another child at some point in time

IVF will not only help you get pregnant once but allow you to have another child in the future. This is done through a method called cryopreservation. During the treatment, only one fertilized egg is inserted into the woman's womb. The remaining eggs and sperm are kept for future use.

### Higher chances of getting pregnant.

Have you made attempts in conceiving but failed? IVF increases your chances of getting pregnant. Patients should keep in mind that there are several factors that may affect their chances, and should therefore manage their expectations accordingly.

However, thanks to technological advancements, the rate of successful pregnancies with the help of Assisted Reproductive Technology (ART) has increased dramatically.



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# In Vitro Fertilization 101: Getting Pregnant Made Easy

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Getting pregnant is truly a very special moment. It is the culmination of the love shared by the husband and wife. For all that they have been through together, conceiving a child is the greatest achievement that any couple can have. Giving life is an important yet challenging and sometimes difficult process. Not everyone is blessed with the capability of conceiving a child despite their efforts.

## In Vitro Fertilization

The field of medicine has seen a surge of innovative discoveries in recent years. One of which is the advancement in reproductive health particularly with new infertility treatments. Compared to medications and other combative treatments, In-vitro fertilization (IVF) is deemed as the most effective of them all.

In-vitro fertilization is the process of conceiving a child outside of the woman's womb. This is done by acquiring a sperm and an egg cell, which are combined in a Petri dish. Once the eggs are fertilized, it becomes an undeveloped embryo. It is then transferred to the uterus (particularly the uterine lining) through careful insemination.

IVF is an ideal treatment not just for those who are having problems conceiving. Women with damaged fallopian tubes or those suffering from endometriosis can also benefit from this medical process. Men who fail to produce a certain level of sperm cells can also be treated as well.



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## The Benefits of In Vitro Fertilization

Through the greatness of science, anything is now within your grasp. Getting pregnant is a treatment away thanks to IVF. There are a lot of reasons why you should take this method seriously when considering a child.

**A high rate of conception compared to other treatments.** IVF was developed and perfected from different methods and years of research and practice. From Intracytoplasmic Sperm Injection to Genetic Counseling, all options will be utilized to give you higher chances of conception.

**Non-invasive.** There are no surgeries when undergoing IVF. It is a safe treatment that will not put you in an uncompromising position. Plus, there are no synthetic medications that will be given. This means that IVF is safe and with minimal side effects. This is why it is important that you work with an accredited IVF clinic only to ensure your safety.

**Saved embryos can be stored for future use.** Some couples want more than one child. IVF allows you to have the choice of being pregnant in your own time. You can have a child now, or you can have another one after a couple of years when you feel ready. Stored embryos from past samples will be “cryopreserved”. Having a frozen embryo ready at any time means you do not have to undergo the same treatment if you decide on getting pregnant again.

## Making A Decision

Choosing to have a child via in-vitro fertilization (IVF) is not easy. There are several considerations you need to think of before undergoing the process. You need to consult with professional IVF clinics and licensed OB-Gyne to help you choose the best option when it comes to having a baby.



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# A Guy's Guide to IVF

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Conception problems are mostly blamed on women, mostly due to misinformation and an incomplete understanding of the factors involved in a couple's attempt to conceive a child. But is it really true? Do women really deserve this much blame for such difficulty?



## Men Have to do Their Part as Well

Studies have shown that men have as much to do with infertility as women. About one-third of failed pregnancies can be attributed to problems the male partner has, while another third can be traced from the female. Indefinite and unknown causes make up the last third.

This is a clear indication that men must explore possible causes that lead to their partner's inability to conceive. The most common stems from issues involving sperm count.

## Keeping your Sperm Healthy

Sperm count and motility are as important as the health of the eggs within the uterus of a woman. If a couple plans on undergoing In Vitro Fertilization or IVF, it is truly essential that the proper count and motility be met. This is to ensure that the success rate of the process is maximized, producing results without any trouble at all.



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## IVF and Men

What does it take for men to get the job done? Here are some tips on how you can take care of your reproductive health and have fruitful results when undergoing IVF.

### Avoid vices and always eat right

Through extensive research, it has been found out that smoking and drinking are linked to infertility problems among men. Undergoing IVF means that you have to be disciplined as well. Avoid vices for the process to actually work.

It is also important that you eat right. A daily diet of unhealthy foods rich in preservatives is not good for your reproductive health. Prepare healthy meals by grilling your meat and having a healthy serving of fruits and vegetables on your plate. Also, always have enough Vitamin C in your diet. Studies have suggested that this can help increase one's sperm count.

### Sleep right

Leptin is a substance that is essential for weight reduction. It also happens to be a very important element during the process of fertility. Lack of sleep can result in low levels of Leptin in the body. With most men likely to be lacking in the right amount of sleep, this has to be considered.

### Wear supporters

Do you often engage in sports? More often than not, too much strenuous activity can affect your reproductive system in a negative way. Always have protection. In this case, proper support equipment will do.

Men truly have as much of an obligation as women do when it comes to IVF. It's mostly about being disciplined and keeping yourself in top shape for the process to actually take place. For the sake of your child-to-be, always remember to do the right things.



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# Finding Success with In Vitro Fertilization

Infertility could be considered a big stumbling block in a couple's pursuit of completing their family. But nowadays, it is possible for aspiring parents to overcome these hurdles with the help of In Vitro Fertilization. IVF is not exactly a new technology in the medical field. The first

successful procedure recorded in 1978. But could people really rely on this procedure to give them the angel that they're hoping for?



Infertility has been plaguing relationships for a very long time, so maybe it is time for people to give methods like IVF a chance. After all, there's no greater reward than being able to bring life to another person.

## The Solid Facts

Infertility could affect both men and women. This is prevalent issue that affects nearly 10 percent of people age 20 and up around the world. Only five percent of all the couples with infertility seek the help of IVF primarily due to its complex and expensive process. However, the great thing about IVF is that it offers couples a higher chances of getting pregnant.

A woman under the age of 35 can expect a 30-35% chance of success after the IVF process. For women aged between 35 and 40, there's a 20 to 25 percent chance of having a baby. Apart from the age difference, the success rate may also vary depending on the cause of infertility and where the procedure is done.



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## A Reason for Hope

The figures may not be much, but for couples who are slowly losing hope as time passes, the success percentages offered by IVF is enough to convince them to give this method a shot. Many couples have tried and failed for years. IVF is usually the last resort for those trying to conceive.

There are several options couples can take with regard to this matter. Men and women could start with fertility drugs. For those with structural problems in their uterus or fallopian tubes, fertility surgery may be a solution. If these things don't work, they could go for artificial insemination or intrauterine insemination. But if all else fails, couples still have IVF to turn to.

The success rates of IVF vary. However, we can't dispute its effectiveness. In the United States alone, more than 200,000 babies are born with the help of IVF and other similar techniques. Do your research or consult your local IVF center to get more information.

### Victory Services

- \* Advanced Semen Analysis including Sperm Morphology (SA)
- \* Atraumatic Assisted Hatching (Partial Zona Dissection; PZD)
- \* Blastocyst Culture and Transfer
- \* Cryopreservation
  - Egg Freezing
  - Embryo and Blastocyst Freezing
  - Sperm and Testicular Tissue Freezing
- \* Frozen-Thawed Embryo Transfer (FET)
- \* IntraCyttoplasmic Sperm Injection (ICSI)
- \* In Vitro Fertilization & Embryo Transfer (IVF-ET)
- \* IUI (Intrauterine Insemination)
- \* Hormonal Test including Pregnancy Test
- \* Micro Epididymal Sperm Aspiration (MESA)
- \* Testicular Sperm Extractin (TESE)
- \* Testicular Biopsy for Diagnosis of Male Infertility



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