

which assesses embryos with respect to their viability and implantation potential.

PSYCHOLOGICAL AND SOCIAL IMPACT

Dr Palshetkar explains that IVF is a result-oriented method and long-term studies have shown that artificially fertilized babies are healthy, but certain issues might arise. "It is the most result oriented among all methods but cost is high. There is also a risk of multiple pregnancies and overstimulation," she says. Many couples require more than one cycle to be successful which will take the cost even higher. "Surrogating, egg and embryo donation also as a method is a little difficult to accept in India and is usually resorted to as a last option. Couples are apprehensive about how they would be viewed by the society and about the psychological impact on the child as well," she adds.



MAXIMISING CONCEIVING

Gynaecologist Dr Rishma Pai suggests that when routine methods fail to achieve pregnancy in two years' time one can resort to ART. She says that certain precautions and steps need to be taken to maximise conceiving. "Do not delay the first pregnancy beyond 35 as ovarian reserve starts reducing. Baseline investigation for female fertility, sonography, a blood test called AMH in women can easily predict their ovarian reserve. Do the baseline

fertility investigation for male like semen analysis and sperm abnormality," says Pai.

Thyroid and prolactin abnormality should be ruled out by doing tests and one must avoid smoking and alcohol as it reduces sperm count and motility. "One must not waste important reproductive age in doing more than 3-6 cycles of IUI depending on the age of women. They should quickly move to In vitro fertilization," says Pai.

OPTIONS FOR COUPLES SEEKING HELP GETTING PREGNANT

Options available to couples in India to help deal with infertility and their success rate in women not more than 35 years of age. Stated below are approximate costs per cycle but the charges vary from hospital to hospital.

OVULATION INDUCTION WITH LETROZ WITH IUI (INTRA UTERINE INSEMINATION) AND OVULATION INDUCTION WITH LETROZ PLUS GONADOTROPIN WITH IUI (INTRA UTERINE INSEMINATION)

In this process 'Washed sperm' (spermatozoa) which have been removed from most other components of the seminal fluids, are injected

directly into a woman's uterus. Success percentage-8-10%
RATING: 1/5
COST: Rs 5-10,000

OVULATION INDUCTION WITH GONADOTROPIN ONLY WITH IUI (INTRA UTERINE INSEMINATION)

Success percentage: 15-20%
RATING: 3/5
COST OF INJECTIONS PER CYCLE: Rs 5,000-10,000

IVF (IN VITRO FERTILISATION) / ICSI (INTRACYTOPLASMIC SPERM INJECTION)

A process specially used for male infertility, Invitro involves a process by which

egg cells are fertilised by sperm outside the body. In ICSI, each egg is injected with one sperm using a special machine called the micromanipulator.

SUCCESS PERCENTAGE: 50-60%
RATING: 4/5
Cost per cycle: Rs 70,000 to Rs 1,00,000
ICSI: Rs 15-20,000

EGG DONATION, EMBRYO DONATION, AND SURROGACY
Success percentage: 60% to 70%
RATING: 4/5
COST FOR EGG AND EMBRYO DONATION: Rs 1,00,000- Rs 2,00,000

CELEB COUPLES WHO HAVE OPTED FOR ASSISTED PREGNANCIES



SARAH JESSICA PARKER AND MATTHEW BRODERICK

Sarah Jessica Parker and husband Matthew Broderick had twins via surrogacy last year. (PICS/AFP)

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