

## Infertility and Assisted Reproductive Technology

Infertility is on the rise. 1 in 5 married women aged 15 to 49 with no prior births are unable to get pregnant after 1 year of trying. Overall, 11% of women and 9% of men in the U.S. have been diagnosed with infertility.

- Infertility is a *symptom* of underlying reproductive health conditions or age and is often the result of four or more unaddressed reproductive conditions in a couple.
- Underlying causes for infertility include endometriosis, polycystic ovary syndrome (PCOS), hormonal imbalances, ultra-low body fat, and blocked fallopian tubes in women and low sperm count, low sperm motility, and lifestyle factors such as environmental toxins and alcohol consumption in men.

There is no one-size-fits-all solution to infertility. Restorative reproductive medicine addresses the root causes of infertility and improves a person's overall health. This can improve a couple's chances of naturally conceiving a child by 32%, even after failed cycles of *in vitro* fertilization (IVF).

### Fast Facts on IVF and Big Fertility in the United States

IVF accounts for 99% of all assisted reproductive technology procedures.

- **80%** of IVF attempts result in a living human embryo by sperm fertilizing an egg in a petri dish.
- **23%** of total IVF attempts are successful and less than 10% are successful for women over age 40.
- **90%** of embryos are destroyed, frozen, or fail to implant in IVF.
- **76%** of Americans do not think leftover embryos should be destroyed, while 68% have a favorable view of IVF.
- **75%** of fertility clinics offer preimplantation genetic testing, including (73%) for sex selection.

Once an embryo is created, the only options that parents have before them are to implant, freeze, destroy, donate to research, or place the embryo up for adoption.

- No federal or state database tracks the number of embryos created in the United States.
- For every one of the 413,776 cycles performed in 2021, an average of 10-15 embryos could have been created.
- It is estimated that around one million embryos are frozen in liquid nitrogen tanks in the United States alone.
- A single cycle of IVF costs anywhere from \$12,000 to \$30,000. A “cycle” refers to the process doctors follow to create the embryos.
- In 2022, the global IVF industry was valued at \$35 billion.
- On average, it is estimated that it costs more than \$61,000 to achieve either a live birth or to determine that continued efforts are not likely to succeed.

#### *Medical Risks of IVF*

- Mothers have higher rates of hypertensive disorders (like preeclampsia), rates of C-sections, gestational diabetes, severe morbidity, postpartum hemorrhage, ovarian hyperstimulation, and seizures.
- Babies have an increased risk of cancer, autism, and congenital defects.

#### *Ethical Challenges of Big Fertility*

- IVF circumvents a person’s body without treating infertility or improving miscarriage rates.
- Big Fertility is a self-regulated industry that relies on recommended guidelines, and few laws, leaving parents and embryos vulnerable.
- The industry combines self-regulation, profit, and the creation of human life under one umbrella with little oversight from outside laws or regulations to hold them accountable for providing the best ethical and medical care.
- Parents and embryonic children often suffer, due to negligence or misconduct, at the hands of fertility clinics with little legal recourse.