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New Classification of Egg Freezing Opens Door for Healthy Women Who Wish to Preserve Fertility

Center For Reproductive Medicine in Orlando Can Help Women Use ‘Young’ Eggs to Increase Pregnancy Chances Later in Life

ORLANDO, Fla. (Feb. 19, 2013) - Elizabeth was a 37-year-old single professional with no prospects for marriage, but plenty of desire to be a mom someday. So she decided to freeze her eggs in the hopes that she will be able to use them later in life.

“I was just out of time, biologically speaking, with a great career but no prospects for a husband,” she says. “Freezing my eggs gave me that extra level of security.”

A process that has been around for several years, oocyte freezing got a boost recently when the American Society of Reproductive Medicine (ASRM) lifted the ‘experimental’ label, effectively giving fertility clinics nationwide the green light to offer it on a broader scale, particularly to healthy women like Elizabeth.

“Life’s events don’t always happen on schedule,” says Sejal Dharia Patel, M.D., a reproductive endocrinologist at the Center for Reproductive Medicine in Orlando, Fla., which was recently recognized as one of the top 10 IVF clinics in America. “Sometimes young women fall in love, get married and start having healthy babies at a young age, when their fertility rate is highest. Other times, something else happens. This provides options to those women.”

For its report titled “Mature Oocyte Cyropreservation,” the ASRM stated that pregnancy rates using eggs that were frozen led to the birth of healthy babies at a rate comparable to IVF methods using fresh eggs. The ASRM reviewed data from nearly 1,000 published papers on the topic, including many observational studies and a few randomized controlled trials.

In these studies, eggs were frozen using a fast-freezing method called vitrification, which eliminates the forming of ice crystals that can damage the eggs’ chromosomes. The lack of ice crystals – a problem often encountered when using earlier, slow-freezing methods – is vital for healthy eggs. The woman’s age at the time of egg freezing also figures prominently, as success rates with egg, or oocyte,
cryopreservation appear to decline as the woman’s age increases.

“A woman is born with all the eggs she’ll ever have, and the best eggs are the first to be released,” Patel says, “so if it is possible for a woman to preserve her eggs when she is in her 20s or early 30s, she has a much better chance of having a healthy pregnancy later in life.”

The Center for Reproductive Medicine (CRM), one of the only reproductive centers in the United States to have an on-site oocyte freezing and storage facility, has delivered four successful babies resulting from egg freezing. CRM has another three mothers beyond the second trimester from frozen-thawed eggs.

“The success rates have been very encouraging,” says Dr. Patel.

Those success rates were certainly persuasive for Elizabeth, who is now married and is trying to conceive a baby naturally. There’s just one thing missing that’s often present for women over 35 who are trying to get pregnant: Stress.

“I’m not worried,” she says. “If we can’t conceive on our own, we always have my frozen eggs. It gives me that extra level of security.”

About The Center for Reproductive Medicine
Founded in 1985, The Center for Reproductive Medicine (CRM) in Orlando is one of the most successful fertility centers in the Southeast, drawing patients from 47 states and nearly a dozen foreign countries. CRM’s five infertility specialists share more than 90 years of combined experience and are nationally recognized as leaders in the field of reproductive medicine. CRM is part of an elite category of infertility clinics that are equipped with on-site embryology, laboratory and surgical facilities, providing patients with the highest quality of fertility care and convenience. Each fertility case is different, and women are advised to talk with their reproductive endocrinologist before making their decision regarding any treatment. For more information, visit www.ivforlando.com or call 800-343-6331.