Management of Infertility

Infertility is a common problem, affecting about ten percent of the women between 15 years to 44 years of age. Problems in the men and women each contribute about one third of the causes of infertility, while the remaining third is due to combined problems.

Risk Factors for Infertility

For Women:

- Ovulation disorders and other hormonal disorders that affect the release of eggs
- Fibroids or swellings in the uterus
- Poor diet, alcohol intake, smoking, stress, etc.
- Older age
- Diseases like tuberculosis, cancers, chemotherapy for cancers, radiation therapy, etc.

For Men:

- Heavy alcohol use, drugs addictions
- Smoking
- History of mumps and pox, chemotherapy, radiation, etc.
- Use of tight undergarments and men who work in hot areas
- Some medicines like anti-hypertensives (high blood pressure medicine), medicine for stomach ulcers and antibiotics have also been implicated

Evaluation

For Women: the simple way to check whether the woman is ovulating is to check the early morning temperature, when a small rise occurs with ovulation. Checking the cervical mucus every morning could again help in finding out about ovulation; Ultrasound examination; Blood tests for blood sugars, thyroid functions; Diagnostic laparoscopy and hysteroscopy

<u>For Men:</u> the presence and quality of sperms are assessed. Varicocele (or increased blood vessels around the testis) is either confirmed or ruled out. Sometimes there might be a block along the way or retrograde (backward) ejaculation

Medical/Surgical Treatment

The medical treatment often aims at stimulating ovulation when ovulation is a problem. Hormones, medicines like Clomiphene and Bromocriptine or cabergoline. Treatments of the associated diseases are also important.

Examples of surgical treatments available are: relieving or bypassing tubal blocks, ovarian drilling, removal of ovarian cysts, edometriosis, adhesions, pus pockets, etc., removing myomas or swellings in the uterus.

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