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ARTworks

Male Factor Infertility Assistance through TESA

May benefit patients who are experiencing specific causes of male infertility

TESA (testicular epididymal sperm aspiration) is the newest state-of-the-art technology provided by the ART Program of Alabama. Dr. Cecil Long trained with Professor Ian Craft at the London Gynaecology and Fertility Centre to learn the TESA technique.

The most recent advances with TESA and ICSI (intracytoplasmic sperm injection) can be crucial treatments for certain types of infertility, particularly male factor infertility. Men who have a low or absent sperm count due to obstructive causes like failed vasectomy reversal, absence of vas deferens or scar tissue in their outlet track can benefit from this new office-based procedure to obtain sperm. This may also benefit some men who make low levels of sperm due to problems in the testicles.

Since the number of sperm retrieved is so small, it is necessary to combine this technique of sperm recovery (TESA) with in vitro fertilization and ICSI (intracytoplasmic sperm injection).

The ART Program has been successful in retrieving sperm in over 75% of attempts, and two of seven couples who have undergone TESA and IVF have become pregnant. The ART Program is reporting no difference in fertilization rates in males requiring TESA compared

to males with low sperm counts (total motile sperm < 20 million) when combined with ICSI and IVF.

We are very excited about TESA and the wonderful success we have seen. If you have any questions, or if you know of couples that might be candidates for TESA, please do not hesitate to contact us for a free telephone consultation.

Counseling Services

Impaired fertility is a life crisis with physical, emotional and financial impact. This experience can devastate one's self-esteem, create tensions in the strongest of marriages and strain relationships with family and friends. Developing decision making strategies, learning stress management skills and practicing more effective communication can reduce the impact of fertility. Susan Trimm, a licensed clinical social worker, is a resource for ART patients. She has both personal and professional experience in dealing with infertility.

Ms. Trimm is available by appointment. Her office is located within the ART facility for your convenience. For more information on services and fees or to learn more about RESOLVE, call 205-892-9654.

Patient Message Center

Patients seem pleased with our new message center! Messages left on the nursing message center will be answered through your personal voice mail box in our patient message center or you may be called directly. The patient message center is an automated voice message system for Program staff to leave messages for you (answers to your questions, reporting lab results or care information). You can retrieve your messages by dialing the patient message center directly at 205-803-1999 or 1-800-338-0765 and by entering your social security number as your pin number. Begin entering your PIN at the start of the voice mail message.

In order to receive a return message the same day, we request you call our nurse message center by 3:00 p.m. on business days. We ask that you allow our staff a processing period before trying to retrieve your messages or results.

When requesting a prescription, it is important to leave your name, telephone number (in case we need to call you), medication needed, pharmacy name and telephone number so that we may call in the appropriate prescription needed.

Questions & Answers

Q: How do I use my LH surge kit?

A: You will need to test for your surge between 5:00 - 8:00 p.m. each evening. Limit your fluid intake for two hours prior to the test to prevent your urine from being too diluted. Count your cycle days and start testing three days after your last Clomid or Serophene tablet, or as directed by the MD or nurse if you are not on medication.

There are several kits on the market for surge testing. We recommend OvuQuick, OvuQuick 1 Step, Easy LH or Sure Step. You must follow the directions for the kit that you are using. Read your instructions through at least once prior to testing your urine for the first time.

The kit instructions will tell you that you are not having an LH surge unless your spot or line is as dark or darker than the reference spot or line, but we want you to notify us sooner. Usually, on the first evening when you begin your surge the spot or line will be very faint. It should get a little darker the next evening, and we want you to consider this your positive surge, even though it may not be as dark as the reference spot or line.

Call our office at 1-800-476-9784 or 205-870-9784 the evening that you detect your surge to report your surge. Listen to the directions on the message and leave your name, birth date and a telephone number at the end of the message. If your surge occurs during the week, follow the directions on the message. If your surge occurs on a Friday or Saturday evening, leave your information on the surge message center and be at the Birmingham clinic between 7:30 and 8:30 a.m. the next morning. On your first cycle and each time you change medications, you will need to make love two to six hours prior to your appointment time in preparation for a post-coital test.

If you do not have a positive surge by the evening of the 14th day, call the message center to report your negative surge. Your appointment will be set up for the following day (day 15). If your negative surge occurs

on Friday or Saturday evening, leave your information on the surge message center and be at the Birmingham office between 7:30 and 8:30 a.m. the next morning.

Q: What is HCG?

A: HCG (Human Chorionic Gonadotropin) prepares the mature follicles for ovulation. It is given in the form of an IM injection and is usually taken 36 hours before egg retrieval. This may mean that you must take your HCG injection late at night. Do not take any HCG until you have been given specific instructions to do so.

Q: Is the office open on weekends?

A: Although the Birmingham office opens at 7:30 a.m. on weekends, weekend services are limited to patients requiring treatment or testing on specific days of their cycles. These services or tests might include: IVF or gonadotropin cycles; LH surges that occur on Friday or Saturday night; day 3 of cycle falls on weekend and bloodwork is required; intrauterine insemination (IUI); collapsed ultrasounds or post-coital tests. To minimize your waiting time, we have implemented a weekend scheduling system. We request that you schedule all weekend services or report your LH surge on the voice mail system. Scheduled patients are seen first.

Q: What is progesterone?

A: Progesterone is a naturally occurring hormone, produced by the corpus luteum in the ovary. It is essential for maintenance of a pregnancy. Progesterone may be given as an IM injection or vaginally as a capsule, suppository or the newest, a gel. Because progesterone is produced in high quantities in pregnancy, you may experience side effects commonly associated with pregnancy such as nausea or vomiting, breast tenderness, and absence of menses. It is not uncommon to experience irritation at the site of injection or vaginal irritation when suppositories or capsules are used. These side

effects, however, should be reported to the nurse.

Q: Explain the services offered in your Huntsville location?

A: As a satellite, the Huntsville office is limited in its scope of services. Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday hours are 7:30 a.m. to noon. Tuesday hours are 7:30 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. with a physician in the office for appointments. The Huntsville office is not available for weekend and holiday services. The office is staffed with a Nurse Practitioner who is in constant contact with our Birmingham office.

We can provide "same-day" results for patients who have blood drawn and prepared prior to the courier pick-up at 10:00 a.m. Results will be communicated through the patient voice mail system.

For patient convenience, the Birmingham office will be the primary communication channel for the ART Program's offices. All inquiries, appointment requests for the physicians or nurses and LH surges, including those for the Huntsville office, will be scheduled through the Birmingham office. Questions about treatment and lab results, including after-hours calls to our answering service, will continue to be handled through the Birmingham office.

Should you have additional questions, please do not hesitate to ask a nurse or the physician.

The ART Program of Alabama was started in 1986. Under the direction of Dr. Kathryn Honea, Dr. Virginia Houseman and Dr. Cecil Long, the ART Program has grown to be the largest IVF Program in the state, as well as one of the largest in the Southeast region. To date, 417 babies have been born as a result of our IVF treatment, with 66 ongoing IVF pregnancies and thousands more from other forms of assisted reproductive technology provided through the ART Program.

A R T SM



ASSISTED REPRODUCTIVE TECHNOLOGY

Earnie Golding Family-Building Foundation

For over five years, the ART Program has been pursuing the possibility of assisting our patients to develop a public, non-profit foundation.

In July, due to the sudden death of Earnie Golding, Dr. Honea's husband, we incorporated the Earnie Golding Family-Building Foundation. An outpouring of donations in his name has provided the initial funding to launch the Foundation. A study was conducted to explore sources of funding, including corporate and individual donations, as well as the availability of volunteers to assist with ongoing organizational efforts. The study results demonstrated sufficient interest and commitment to this organization structure.

We now have in place a Board of Directors and are in the process of recruiting volunteers to assist with the organization of the foundation, facilitate mail-outs, process inquiries and correspondence, coordinate fund raising functions and educate the community,

including businesses about the Foundation and its goals. The Earnie Golding Family-Building Foundation will seek financial funding through personal donations, corporate sponsorship, government grants and fund-raising functions.

Our goals remain:

- educating the public regarding the medical, emotional and financial aspects of infertility;
- providing financial assistance to couples seeking infertility treatment through any SART-approved program;
- supporting couples with high-risk multiples or poor outcomes through financial and emotional resources.

To make a contribution or inquire further, please feel free to contact us at:

ART Program of Alabama
Earning Golding Family-Building Foundation
2006 Brookwood Medical Center Drive
Suite 508
Birmingham, AL 35209
205-870-9784 or 1-800-870-9784
FAX: 205-870-0698

IVF Successes

October 1996 - July 1997 *
In Vitro Fertilization

All Patients, All Protocols

• Cycles Started	159
• Cancelled Cycles	28
• Retrievals	131
• Transfers	123
• Clinical Pregnancies	50
• Rate/cycle start	31%
• Rate/retrieval	38%
• Rate/transfer	41%

* Excludes women 40 years of age and over and Clomid cycles.

- * Includes male factor patients, fertilized with ICSI.
- * Includes cycles with Assisted Embryo Hatching (AEH).
- * Includes Testicular Epididymal Sperm Aspiration (TESA).

Suggestions

We have recently incorporated a "suggestion line" for you to confidentially give us your suggestions and feedback on all areas of our services, both positive and negative issues. With your input, we can identify opportunities for improvement at the ART Program. To leave your confidential message, please call 205-803-1996. All messages are retrieved by management personnel who are not part of the routine patient services and will follow up on the issues as needed.

Support News

MOST (Mothers of Supertwins) is a non-profit organization providing infertility resources, empathy and support to families with triplets and more. The telephone number for headquarters in New York is 516-434-MOST.

Heather Sasser, a mother of quadruplets, residing in the Decatur area, has been named the regional coordinator for the Northern Region. Heather can be reached at 205-350-2399.

Lynn Dias, a surgeon with quadruplets in the Mobile area is a resource for those persons living in South Alabama. Lynn can be reached at 334-343-2086.

The Triplet Connection has a wonderful WEB site you can find and review at www.inreach.com/triplets. Triplet Connection has an informative newsletter for parents of multiples. To receive this newsletter, please call 209-474-0885 or write, Triplet Connection,

P.O. Box 99571, Stockton, California
95209.

E-mail and Web Page

If you would like to reach us via e-mail,
please write us:

ART_Program@msn.com

We are currently developing a WEB page for the ART Program of Alabama and will announce its inception in the next newsletter. Look for us by January 1998 on the World Wide Web.

A R T SM



ASSISTED REPRODUCTIVE TECHNOLOGY

Support Groups

ALABAMA

MOST (Mothers of Supertwins). For more information, please contact MOST at 516-434-MOST, Heather Sasser, regional coordinator for Northern Alabama at 205-350-2399 or Lynn Dias, regional coordinator for Southern Alabama at 334-343-2086.

BIRMINGHAM

RESOLVE^O of Alabama meets on the second and fourth Tuesday of each month in Birmingham. Information regarding specific programs can be obtained by calling the local RESOLVE office at 205-969-8803.

Mothers of Twins meets at Baptist Montclair Medical Center in the Nursing Auditorium on the first Tuesday of each month from 7:00-9:00p.m. Contact Edna Rush at 205-871-5558 for more information

Marvelous Multiples is a series of prenatal educational classes held each quarter at Brookwood Medical Center. It is open to all parents expecting multiples, including couples delivering at other hospitals. Call Catherine Edmonds at 205-328-2958 for additional information and registration.

Stepping Stones is a support group designed for women struggling with infertility. The meetings are held at Briarwood Church, Room M-202A on the last Monday of each month. Meetings are 7:00-8:30 p.m. For more information, call Cathy Barrington at 205-595-6012.

HUNTSVILLE

Pathways to Parenthood meets the second Wednesday of each month at the Huntsville Hospital Medical Tower Women's Center, Suite 20, from 7:00-9:00 p.m. For more information, contact Virginia Polenz at 205-517-6607 or 205-517-6600.

Marvelous Multiples is a series of prenatal educational classes held at Huntsville Hospital Women's Center. Call Expectant Parents Program at 205-517-6601 for more information.

MOBILE

Hannah's Workshop meets the last Thursday of every month at 6:30 p.m. The meetings are held at the Christ United Methodist Church, 6101 Grelot Road. For more information, call Cindy Wiggins at 334-649-6631.

MONTGOMERY

RESOLVE^O meets the first Monday of each month at Frazer Methodist Church, Room 7206 (2nd Floor), 6000 Atlanta Highway, from 7:00 - 8:00 p.m. Call Mollie Isaacson at 334-288-9009 or 334-244-9738 for additional information.

Trinity Presbyterian Church has a support group which meets on Thursdays at 6:30 p.m. For more information, contact Rosemary and Buddy Hudson at 334-288-7154 or Rosemary's office at 334-284-4196.

TUSCALOOSA

The Tuscaloosa Infertility Group is headed by Margaret and Sherman Howard. For information, please contact the Howards at P.O. Box 117, Northport, Alabama 35476.

TRIPLET CONNECTION

To reach on the Internet, find at www.inreach.com/triplets or Triplet Connection, P.O. Box 99571, Stockton, California 95209. Call for more information 209-474-0885.

To add additional support groups to this list, please contact Monica Hawk at the ART Program, 205-870-9784 or 1-800-476-9784. You may also e-mail us at ART_Program@msn.com.