



# ART *works*<sup>SM</sup>

## Celebration of Life – 15<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

2001: A Technology Odyssey – Using Technology for:

- Communication
- Education
- Healthcare

For 15 years, the ART Program of Alabama has been assisting couples with infertility to achieve their dream – having a child. On May 12, 2001, the Saturday before Mother's Day, over 600 people attended the 15<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration of Life. "2001: A Technology Odyssey" was celebrated amidst a roomful of mothers, fathers and their children. We were all reminded that these children were conceived as a result of the many state-of-the-art techniques offered at the ART Program. While children had their face painted and played in the moonwalk, the babies participated in a diaper derby. A drawing took place giving prizes donated by local businesses to babies, children and even the adults; carnations were given to the mothers in honor of Mother's Day.

The children had a wonderful time; there were 38 sets of twins, eight sets of triplets and one set of quads – six year old boys. The youngest baby in attendance was two weeks old; the oldest, of which there were four, were 15 years old (one set of twins). Families traveled from as far away as Cape Girardeau, Missouri, Mississippi and Tennessee.

Since the ART Program's inception in 1986, over 850 babies have been born as a result of in vitro fertilization technology. Almost 3,000 more have been born as a result of other assisted reproductive therapies.

We thank all that attended and look forward to the 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration set for Mother's Day weekend of 2006.

Please visit our website for photos – group and candid – from the Celebration of Life at [www.artprogramAL.com](http://www.artprogramAL.com).

### Healthbanks.com – Online Patient Education Network

The ART Program has recently teamed up with Healthbanks.com, a patient education network, to provide an exciting educational tool to our current and future patients. Healthbanks.com offers trusted medical information, directly between our physicians and patients on the Internet, extending the care of the physician into the patient's home – on their own terms.

The ART Program is providing customized information on this website that will allow current and future patients to go online and review certain areas of care, procedures or treatment and be able to compile questions for the provider. The program helps to focus patients' questions, allowing the physician and nurses more time on issues of concern to the patient. Patients can add questions to their "notebank" and bring it to their appointment so that all their questions will be addressed.

You can access this information by logging on to [www.artprogramAL.com](http://www.artprogramAL.com) and click on the healthbanks.com link. Or you can directly log on to [www.healthbanks.com](http://www.healthbanks.com) and enter your doctor's user i.d. and password (see below).

Dr. Kathryn Honea

User i.d.: 870978401

Password: art205

Dr. Virginia Houserman

User i.d.: 870978402

Password: art205

Dr. Cecil Long

User i.d.: 870978403

Password: art205

### Future Newsletters

Beginning with our next newsletter to be published in Spring of 2002, we will be using the new technology of the Internet for publishing our future newsletters.

If you would like to continue receiving a hard copy of the newsletter, ART *works*, you may e-mail the ART Program at: [artprogramAL@artprogramAL.com](mailto:artprogramAL@artprogramAL.com) and advise us or you can also complete, cut out and send the coupon located on the last page of this newsletter and we will keep you on the mailing list. Please mail the coupon to:

Monica Hawk  
ART Program of Alabama  
2006 Brookwood Medical Center Drive  
Suite 508  
Birmingham, AL 35209

You can view this newsletter, as well as past and future newsletters, online by accessing the ART Program's website at: [www.artprogramAL.com](http://www.artprogramAL.com) and going to the Articles of Interest link.

### Educational Seminars

Several organizations and companies have requested the ART Program speak at their educational Lunch and Learn programs to provide information and education. If you are part of an organization or company that would be interested in arranging a speaker for your next event, please call Monica Hawk at 205-870-9784, extension 139 or toll-free at 1-800-476-9784, or you can e-mail your request to: [artprogramAL@artprogramAL.com](mailto:artprogramAL@artprogramAL.com).

## Upcoming Events

### Woman's Day Magazine

Drs. Honea, Houserman and Long and the ART Program of Alabama have been chosen to be featured in the January 2002 *Woman's Day* magazine in a special healthcare section entitled "Southern Alabama Healthcare Profiles". This section is designed to highlight healthcare providers in Birmingham, Montgomery and surrounding areas. Look for us on the newsstand in the January 2002 issue of *Woman's Day*.

### Southern Women's Show 2001

The ART Program of Alabama will again have a booth at the Southern Women's Show. This is the fourth year the Program will have a booth. The Show takes place at the Birmingham-Jefferson Convention Complex October 4-7, 2001; hours are Thursday, Friday and Saturday from 10:00 a.m. – 8:00 p.m. and Sunday from 11:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m. Come visit us at Booth 230/232. We look forward to seeing you!

### National Infertility Awareness Week

During the week of October 7-13, 2001, National Infertility Awareness Week, look for the ART Program to be sponsoring several events. An information table will be set up in the Brookwood Medical Center cafeteria and we will be participating in a telephone panel answering questions on FOX-6 news during the week.

## Satellite Stories

### Huntsville

The Huntsville satellite of the ART Program has moved its location to 401 Lowell Drive, Suite 24, Huntsville. This move was made to larger offices to better serve our patients. We hope you will find the facility an improvement.

We have expanded our facility to include an Andrology laboratory, a videoconsultation room and private collection room. We have expanded our services to include Andrology testing: semen analysis, semen prep for SPA's and sperm antibodies. Specialized testing is available on an every-other-week schedule. Semen prep for IUI is performed daily Monday-Friday.

You can find a map and directions to all of our offices by visiting our website at [www.artprogramAL.com](http://www.artprogramAL.com) and going to the locations link. Or, you can call 1-800-476-9784 and ask that a map and directions be mailed or faxed to you.

## Montgomery

Since our last newsletter last summer, we have opened our Montgomery satellite office. We have received overwhelming positive responses from patients who are using this facility. Similar to the operations of our Huntsville satellite, new patient visits are performed in Birmingham. This gives patients the opportunity to become familiar with the Birmingham facility, care providers and locations for weekend visits. Return office visits with the physician are scheduled for the satellite office as a videoconsultation with the primary physician. On a daily basis, the Montgomery nurse practitioner, Sarah Shoemaker, offers services including ultrasounds, ovulation monitoring such as surges, post-coital tests, venipuncture for lab testing, pap smears and cultures, injection instructions and treatment assessment, counseling, as well as intrauterine inseminations. Andrology services, which include semen analysis, semen prep for sperm penetration assays (SPA) shipment and sperm antibodies for shipment is available on an every-other-week basis.

## Service Awards

### Fifteen-Year Service Award

**Debbie Merryman** is the Supervisor of the Embryology and Andrology Laboratories and has received her 15-year service award. Debbie has been by Dr. Honea's side since the inception of the ART Program in 1986. Debbie is currently completing her Master's Degree in Clinical Embryology at the University of Leeds in England. She currently holds a Bachelor's of Science from the University of Alabama-Birmingham. Debbie has provided exceptional service for our patients.

### Five-Year Service Awards

**Lea Jackson** joined the ART Program on November 11, 1996. Lea is currently a patient account representative and financial counselor.

**Susan Collins** is the Supervisor of Nursing Services and became a part of the ART Program staff on February 26, 1996. Susan has a Bachelor's in Business Administration from the University of Alabama-Tuscaloosa and an Associate's Degree in Nursing from Mitchell Community College in Statesville, NC.

We are proud of Lea and Susan having earned their five-year service awards.

## IVF Successes

January 1999 – July 2001

### **All Patients, All Protocols**

• Cycles Started	537
• Cancelled Cycles	68
• Retrievals	469
• Transfers	462
• Clinical Pregnancies	182
• Rate/cycle start	34%
• Rate/retrieval	39%
• Rate/transfer	39%
• ICSI Pregnancy Rate/retrieval	37%

- ❖ Excludes women 40 years of age and over.
- ❖ Excludes egg recipient cycles.
- ❖ Excludes cryobanking and TESA cycles.

## TESA (Testicular Epididymal Sperm Aspiration) Successes

January 2000 – July 2001

### **All Patients, All Protocols**

• Cycles Started	25
• Cancelled Cycles	5
• Retrievals	20
• Transfers	18
• Clinical Pregnancies	6
• Rate/cycle start	24%
• Rate/retrieval	30%
• Rate/transfer	33%

- ❖ Excludes cryobanking.
- ❖ Excludes non-obstructive azospermia

## Egg Donor Program Results

January 1997 – July 2001

### **All Patients, All Protocols**

• Cycles Started	121
• Cancelled Cycles	26
• Transfers	95
• Clinical Pregnancies	38
• Rate/cycle start	31%
• Rate/transfer	40%

- ❖ Excludes cryobanking

## Egg Donor Program

The ART Program of Alabama continues to offer an Egg Donation Program. This program is designed to allow a woman with healthy eggs to donate some of her eggs to an infertile couple who might otherwise be unable to have a family.

The first egg donor pregnancy occurred in 1984. Since then, over 5,000 babies have been born in the U.S. as a result of donor eggs. Experience and studies have shown that offspring of donor eggs are generally healthy children with no greater risk of birth defect than all children in the general population.

### **Who Can Be an Egg Donor?**

The criteria for egg donation are understandably strict. In order to donate, a woman must be between the ages of 19 and 32. She must have two normal ovaries and regular menstrual cycles. She must not smoke or use other drugs. The donor must be comfortable with injections, as the ovulation medications are by injection. The donor must agree to physical and psychological screening provided at no cost to her.

There are two types of egg donors, anonymous and known or related.

- Anonymous egg donors wish to keep their identity confidential. The anonymous egg donor is comfortable with the understanding that her donation is totally anonymous. She will not know the outcome of her donation nor will she meet or learn the names of the recipient of her eggs.
- Known donors are women known by or related to the recipient. This type of egg donation involves free exchange of information between the donor and the recipient couple. A psychological consultation is required due to the emotional issues that may arise when donor and recipient are acquainted.

### **Who Would Want Donated Eggs?**

The recipients of donated eggs are married couples with little or no chance of having their own child. The most common reason a couple seeks an egg donor is because the woman's ovaries have stopped producing eggs too soon. She may have had her ovaries removed as a result of disease like endometriosis, cancer, benign tumors or pain. The recipient woman may carry a genetic trait that she does not want to risk passing on to a child.

Male factor infertility does not rule out the use of an egg donor. Testicular Epididymal Sperm Aspiration (TESA) and Intracytoplasmic Sperm Injection (ICSI), two of the newest treatments for male infertility may be used in combination with a donated egg. TESA involves taking sperm from the epididymis or testicle of the man and injecting the sperm (ICSI) into the egg of the woman. This procedure is done in the laboratory. Even when donated sperm is required, an egg donor may be useful.

In the past, couples with severe egg or sperm dysfunction had only two options: adoption or remaining childless. Today, egg donation, TESA and ICSI provide a third option: an opportunity for the couple to experience pregnancy and childbirth together.

### **Frequently Asked Questions**

**Q: "I've had my tubes tied. Can I still be an egg donor?"**

**A:** Yes. As long as you have two normal, healthy ovaries, you can be an egg donor. Your tubes are not necessary.

**Q: "How can I expect to feel when I take the medicines?"**

**A:** The medicines you will take to induce egg production are injections. Most women tolerate these "shots" very well, but some women experience headaches, mood swings, bloating or cramping or stinging at the injection site. Symptoms are usually mild. Egg donors are closely monitored to avoid serious problems.

**Q: "Does it hurt when the eggs are taken?"**

**A:** The egg retrieval is done in the office. The donor is sedated using IV (in the vein) medicines. There is no incision or stitches. The majority of all IVF patients, including egg donors, report minimal, if any, discomfort during the procedure.

**Q: "Will I use up all my eggs if I donate them now?"**

**A:** No, you will not use up all your eggs. Women are born with far more eggs than they can ever use in their lifetime.

**Q: "Will donating eggs reduce the chance of me getting pregnant later in my life?"**

**A:** There is no scientific evidence that donating eggs can decrease your chances of pregnancy.

**Q: "Will I get paid for my eggs?"**

**A:** You are not paid for your eggs, but you are reimbursed for the time you invest in the process. If you complete the screening and are accepted as a donor you can expect to receive \$3,000 for the first cycle donation reimbursement. If you continue as a donor,

you may expect \$3,500 for the second donation reimbursement and \$4,000 for the third, fourth and fifth cycle donation reimbursement. Payment is made at the completion of each donation cycle.

**Q: "How much time does being an egg donor take?"**

**A:** Usually up to 5 visits are needed to complete the screening process. After you are accepted as a donor and matched with a recipient, approximately 8-10 visits over an 8-week period are needed to complete one full donation cycle.

For more information about the Egg Donor Program, please contact Andrea Malone at 205- 870-9784 or 1-800-476-9784, ext. 119.

[artprogramAL.com](http://artprogramAL.com)

The ART Program has made additions to the website to provide:

- maps to our Birmingham, Huntsville and Montgomery offices
- new patient forms including general information, female patient history and male patient history forms.

These forms can be completed online and submitted directly through our website. We ask that patients complete these forms after they have made their initial appointment.

We have also added profiles of our four nurse practitioners; Beth Hide and Patsy Watson who practice in Birmingham, Nancy Scott in Huntsville and Sarah Shoemaker in the Montgomery satellite.

You can also find egg donor information on our new website that focuses specifically on our egg donation program at [www.eggdonorAL.com](http://www.eggdonorAL.com). This new website offers detailed information to prospective donors. Should you have additional questions that are not answered by accessing this site, please call our office and request to speak with the Egg Donor Coordinator.

## COUPON

You will receive a hard copy of the newsletter only if you complete and send this coupon.

Yes, I would like to continue receiving a hard copy of ART *works*. Please continue to send the newsletter to me at the address below:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_

State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_



## Support Groups

### **ALABAMA**

*MOST* (Mothers of Supertwins). *MOST* is for couples experiencing multiple births. There is a quarterly newsletter available, as well as "new mother" packets mailed to expectant or just delivered mothers. For more information, please contact Heather Sasser, regional coordinator for Northern Alabama at 256-350-2399 or Lynn Dias, regional coordinator for Southern Alabama at 334-343-2086. Or, visit their web site at [www.mostonline.org](http://www.mostonline.org).

### **BIRMINGHAM**

*RESOLVE*<sup>®</sup> of Alabama, an infertility discussion group meets bi-monthly for educational meetings on the fourth Tuesday of each month at 6:30 p.m. The Discussion Group of chapter members meets the second Tuesday of each month at 6:30 p.m. Both meetings are held at Dawson Memorial Baptist Church in Homewood. For more information, please call 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

*Birmingham Area Mothers of Multiples*  
[www.bamom.org](http://www.bamom.org)

### **HUNTSVILLE**

*RESOLVE*<sup>®</sup> discussion group meets monthly. Call Tanya Black at 256-883-3231 for details.

*Marvelous Multiples* is a series of prenatal educational classes held at Huntsville Hospital Women's Center. Contact Kelly Johnson at 256-517-6601 for more information.

### **MONTGOMERY**

*RESOLVE*<sup>®</sup> meets monthly. Call Mollie Isaacson at 334-288-9883 for additional information.

#### **Helpful WEB sites:**

[www.asrm.org](http://www.asrm.org)

[www.INCIID.org](http://www.INCIID.org)

[www.resolve.org](http://www.resolve.org)

[www.obgyn.net](http://www.obgyn.net)

[www.fertilethoughts.net](http://www.fertilethoughts.net)

To add additional support groups or more information 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 [artprogramAL@artprogramAL.com](mailto:artprogramAL@artprogramAL.com).

