

Our Story

We write this story for relatively “newcomers” suffering from infertility and who are about to embark on IVF. We are now aware of how naive we were about the whole process and would like to share our experience of IVF. Here goes...

We had been trying to conceive for over a year and after obtaining medical tests, discovered that we had a male factor fertility problem (low sperm count/poor motility etc). The likelihood of conceiving naturally was virtually impossible.

We sought the assistance of a reproductive surgeon who referred us to an IVF clinic. Here are some of the points that we were not aware of at that time:

- that you are able to access IVF through the public health system
- that your private health insurance covers very little of the IVF program (even with the highest coverage)
- that you are able to ‘shop’ around for a less expensive price (believe me, when you continually receive large bills, cost does become an issue)
- that you can choose to transfer to another IVF clinic, or change doctors, at any time you wish

Prior to starting IVF I had to have a laparoscopy, which was all clear. A few months later we commenced the IVF program, which for us was a stimulated cycle with ICSI.

This is what happened

Religiously, I took all of the drugs and injections, obtained all blood tests and vaginal ultrasounds, at egg pick-up, 31 eggs were collected.

After egg pick-up we were told that we would not be getting a fresh embryo transfer two days later as I had over stimulated ovaries and there was the possibility of ‘hyperstimulation’.

We were very concerned that a fresh embryo transfer was vital as everything we had read indicated that the highest percentages of conception were gained from fresh transfers, out of the 31 eggs, 20 embryos resulted and were frozen.

This is what happened next

We did a blastocyst transfer of four embryos, of which only 1 made it to transfer. We did not achieve a pregnancy and we now had 16 embryos left. We did another blastocyst cycle in which eight embryos arrested prior to transfer, resulting in no transfer. We now had eight embryos left.

Another blastocyst cycle in which the remaining eight embryos also arrested prior to transfer, once again resulting in no transfer. We now had no embryos left.

This is where we are today

We are where we started over a year ago and are devastated that for all of our efforts we have only ever had one embryo transferred, with no success. We are left with the dilemma of deciding whether or not to face another stimulated cycle. We are extremely frustrated and our desperation to have a baby grows daily.

However, after receiving counselling, I thought I had stumbled onto an easier way to achieve our dream. This ‘easier’ way was through Artificial Insemination. I was all for it as all it involved was the placing of a donor’s sperm on the cervix (similar to a pap smear), twice during a monthly cycle. It was a service that was also provided at no charge, and involved no pain or invasive procedures.

My husband wasn’t so convinced and I tried to talk him around. Then I woke one night with nightmares about what I had actually asked my husband to agree to. When it came down to it, why were we doing IVF? Why were we trying so hard to have a baby? The answer was that we were trying to expand the love and bond that we had. We wanted to express how much we loved each other by doing something that only the two of us could do - make a baby together.

When it comes down to it, we don’t just want a baby - we want “our” baby. Maybe we aren’t desperate enough yet, or maybe we are too selfish, but we want to look into our baby’s eyes and know that he/she would not be here if it weren’t for us and our devotion and commitment to each other.

Through all of our heartache our relationship has always been the most important thing to us, and will always remain that way. We haven’t given up yet, but we know that with or without a baby, we will still have each other and our lives can be happy and fulfilling.

D & F (NSW)

