

Counselling of Couples before Assisted Conception Treatment

Saheli Mallik^{1*} and Amarnath Mallik²

¹Embryologist, IVF unit, Advanced Medical Research Institute, Calcutta, India

²Consultant Psychiatrist, Kothari Medical Centre, Calcutta, India

Counselling means professional assistance to someone who seeks help to overcome problem. Psychological counselling is a very essential primary assistance to couples, suffering from infertility and willing to undergo assisted conception treatment.

Normal fertility is defined as achieving a pregnancy within 2 years by regular sexual practice. It is estimated that about 84% of couples will achieve pregnancy in the first year and 92 % by the second year. There are definitely variations in the incidence of infertility in different regions of our country.

Infertility is commonly defined as, 1 year of unprotected intercourse that doesn't result into conception. Approximately 40 % of infertility problems are due to female partner and 60 % are due to the male partner or of unknown etiology [1-3].

It is assumed that psychological factors may be responsible for infertility, along with other possible factors [4].

A good number of couples with primary or secondary infertility decide to take help of Assisted Conception or Reproductive Technology (ACR or ART).

It is frequently seen that the couples with infertility, have deep seated anxiety and depression. Due to stress and social pressure often they are victim of helplessness and depression. Hence counselling is essential before starting any kind of treatment. Couples with fertility problems are usually assessed and counselled as follows:

1. Both the partners are encouraged to attend the primary consultation in the clinic together to overcome initial hesitancy and fear of aloneness.
2. Full medical and psychological histories along with physical examination are essential. If any psychological problem is suspected then psychiatric consultation is to be done.
3. Thoroughly investigations are done as a "unit" and reassurance and supportive counselling is needed for the over worried and apprehensive couples.
4. Before IVF treatment, counselling is also essential. Both the partner should be clearly explained the procedure and they are advised to lead a normal healthy life during the treatment. They are advised to avoid unnecessary stress during the treatment procedure.

5. The psychological or mental problems usually seen among female partners are as follows:

- A. Acute stress reaction.
- B. Post traumatic stress following miscarriage
- C. Anxiety disorder
- D. Secondary depression.

These patients need psychiatric assessment, and psychotherapy or counselling [5].

6. The different types of counselling which are usually practised are:

- Information counselling- Primary information which is given to the couple by the infertility specialists may cause tension to few couples. Unexplained fear may be seen at the initial stage of treatment. These patients need reassurance and more elaborate explanation from the counsellor. This will help them to restore their confidence and self- reliance.
- Implication counselling- It aims to enable the infertile couple to understand the implications of the proposed treatment. This is particularly helpful in the donor assisted treatment.
- Support counselling- This is essential to overcome the emotional problems of the clients.
- Therapeutic counselling- This is essential for the couple to cope with the consequences of treatment. It helps both of them to estimate their expectations rationally and face any kind of problems even the failure of the treatment.

Counselling of the couple is very important before and during the treatment because it will help them to go through it with self confidence, and would help them tackle the frustrations and their depression.

References

1. Alma JC (1997) Fertility, family planning, Vital health statistics 23.
2. Am Psych Ass DSM IV Text Revision APA 2000.
3. Burns L (1999) Psychology of Infertility Parthenon.
4. Kainz.K (2001) The role of psychologist in the evaluation and treatment of infertility. Womens Health Issues 11: 481-485.
5. Boivin J (2002) Guideline for counselling in infertility: outline version. ESHRE, Montographs. Oxford UK. Oxford University Press 1301-1304.

*Corresponding author: Saheli Mallik, Embryologist, IVF unit, Advanced Medical Research Institute, Calcutta, India, E-mail: sahelimallik@gmail.com

Received April 19, 2013; Published May 27, 2013

Citation: Mallik S, Mallik A (2013) Counselling of Couples before Assisted Conception Treatment. 2: 690 doi:[10.4172/scientificreports.690](http://dx.doi.org/10.4172/scientificreports.690)

Copyright: © 2013 Mallik S, et al. This is an open-access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License, which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original author and source are credited.