

5 to 90 per cent of all fertility problems are solved but time is most important in the treatment of infertility

What hampers conception

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بے ضرر توجہ سے مطالعہ فرمائیں

Infertility is not a disorder peculiar to women. It may affect men with the same severity and consistency. Though the notions prevailing in the minds of people might nominate the female gender as the only impaired one, this point of view and impression is incorrect in all its manifestations.

Statistics show that women have problems in 50 per cent of the infertility cases whereas 30 per cent of infertility conditions are due to men and 20 per cent of the problems arise because of both genders.

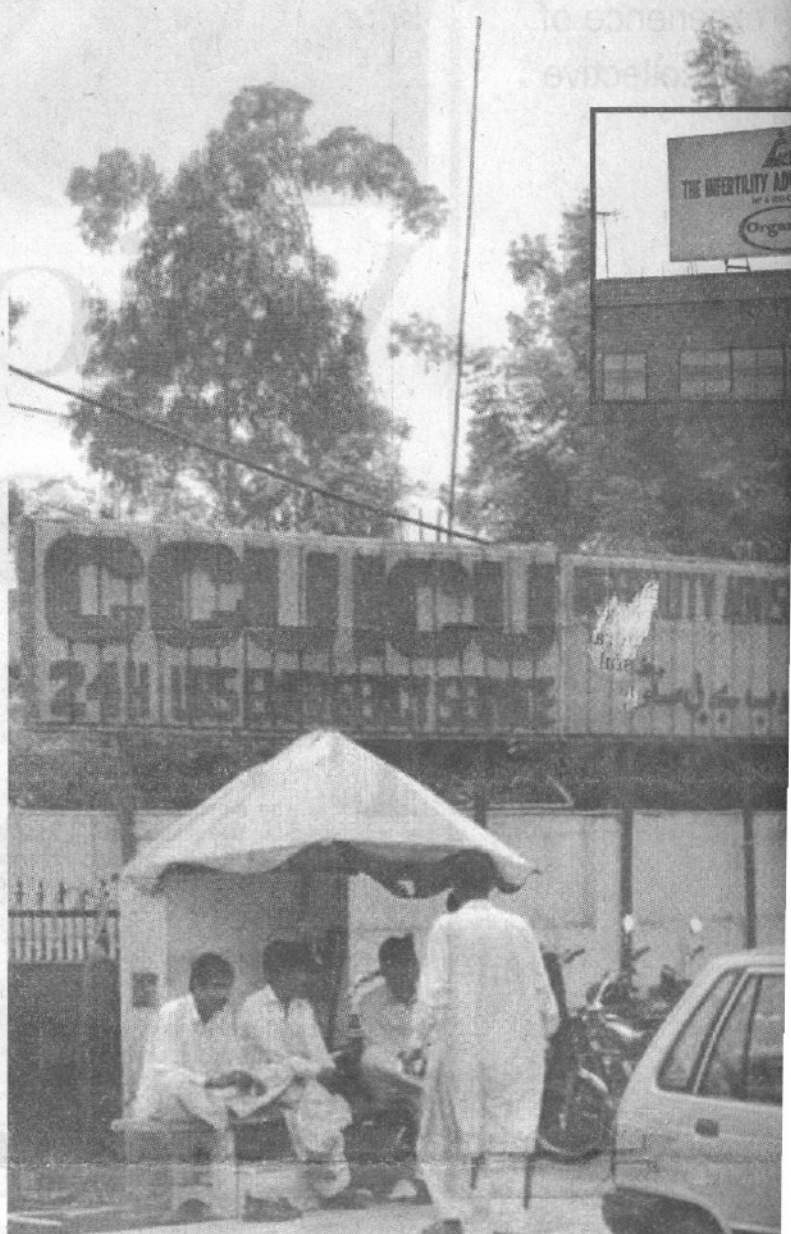
Infertility is defined as the inability to conceive after twelve months of active attempts. But if a woman is over 35 years of age, she should see a doctor about infertility after six months of unprotected intercourse. And the woman who is over 40, should see a reproductive endocrinologist, as soon as she can, because the chances of improving a woman's fertility begin to decrease at this age. Though a woman is born with all of the eggs she will ever have, by the time she reaches her late 30s or 40s many of her eggs become less viable.

A woman may experience and develop an agonising and distressing disorder because of lack of ovulation (to

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By Syed
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special report



lulation (to produce ovum — egg from ovary). This condition can result due to deficiency of viable eggs, hormonal abnormalities and scar tissue that prevents the release of eggs. Some women may have structural anomalies like the closure of fallopian tubes and/or scarring of uterus, which decreases chances of conception.

The most likely causes in case of men include low sperm count, poor sperm motility, abnormally shaped sperm or a combination of all these.

As is common practice, the basic infertility evaluation includes a history focussed on fertility factors, physical examination and laboratory examination. The evaluation should determine if the partner can produce normal semen, if the woman's fallopian tubes are open, and the ovaries are able to produce eggs that are likely to establish a pregnancy. The three most important laboratory evaluations are a semen



Options available: While there is a growing trend where couples are seeking number of them continue to be drawn by the miracle cures advertised in news-

analysis, Follicle Stimulating Hormone (FSH) to determine ovarian reserve and hysterosalpingogram (HSG) to insure that the tubes are open.

All these evaluating parameters can assess the state of reproduction of a couple. However, the age of the couple plays a major role in any final inference. If all the above procedures fail to lay out a clear and exact picture, then laparoscopy may help to probe further and diagnose the problem.

In the recent past, the role of antisperm antibodies has

also been elucidated, which can occur in both men and women. The antibodies may interfere with the sperm's activity and immobilise it. Although attempts have been made to treat the condition, the response is not very promising.

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Fertility

Science & Tech

بے اولاد حضرات خصوصاً توجہ سے مڑنا



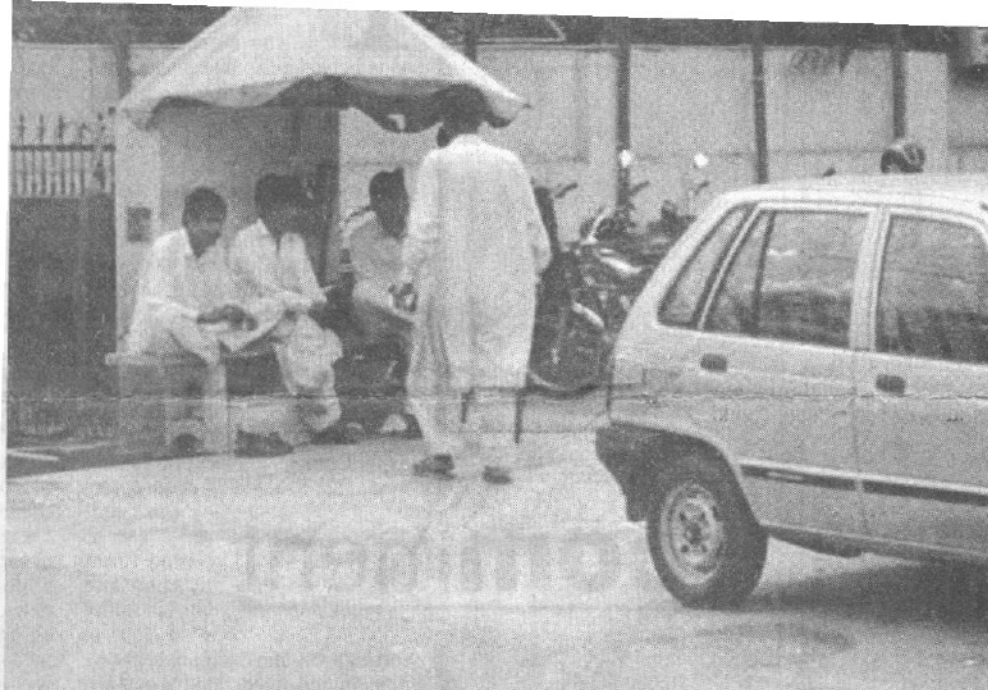
and the number of children that the couple desire must be considered prior to recommending any therapy. Although 85-90 per cent of all fertility problems are solved with medication, artificial insemination or corrective surgery (even if the basic defect remains untreated), it can sometimes be circumvented in women by the techniques of In Vitro Fertilisation (IVF).

The birth of Louise Joy Brown on July 12, 1978, near Manchester, England, was the first recorded case of insemination in a laboratory dish. Another successful method to improve the chances of pregnancy in age-related infertility requires donating an egg. Sometimes the maternal uterus cannot support development. In these cases the zygote can be introduced into the uterus of a surrogate mother. If the embryo survives, development will proceed normally despite the fact that mother has no genetic relationship with the embryo. Surrogate motherhood has proven to be one of the most explosive solutions in terms of ethics and legality.

Drugs like Clomiphene (Clomid) stimulate ovarian egg production. Pregonal and Metrodine are also used to accelerate egg development. These fertility drugs call for careful monitoring because of multiple pregnancies which can result after their administration, as well as birth defects. Besides the use of allopathic therapeutic agents several other modes of treatments have been taken up religiously by the poor sufferers.

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Options available: While there is a growing trend where couples are seeking expert medical help, a large number of them continue to be drawn by the miracle cures advertised in newspapers. Photo: Rahat Dar

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proper information as well as expert advice and treatment.

Since the 1960s when contraceptive pill took the world by storm, the phenomenon of infertility remains dormant.

This issue is not only very delicate, but is also very touchy for couples. They do look for remedies and are ready to take up any mode of therapy. Every instance of infertility is unique in its characteristics, so there should never be an assembly line approach to treating the patients. The age of the woman, the physical diagnosis

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The myriad of treatments offered mostly by quacks, *hakeems*, homeopaths and faith healers mostly mislead the affected couples and are basically a means for minting money. As far as herbal medicines are concerned, they might have some active ingredients which work well in some instances, however, their validity remains questionable.

Alarmingly, these people are undoubtedly making fools of innocent people and reducing their chances of finding a solution. In this situation time is extremely important and valuable, as no treatment can turn back the clock if the time lapses.