

Patient Informed Consent

Assisted Hatching

INTRODUCTION

We desire to improve implantation of embryos by the use of micromanipulation ("assisted hatching"). We hereby request and authorize the Geisinger Medical Center ("GMC") and Fertility Center physicians ("Physicians") and such other assistants as they may designate to perform assisted hatching ("AH").

In authorizing these procedures we acknowledge that we have had the opportunity to discuss fully with the Physicians the nature and purpose of the procedure, the risks, the alternatives, the risks to the alternatives and that all of our questions have been answered to our satisfaction. Based on our discussions with the Physicians and the written materials explaining the procedure supplied to us, we understand the following concerning AH:

NATURE AND PURPOSE OF THE PROCEDURE

- 1) To perform AH, highly specialized equipment is used in which microsurgical instruments are manipulated with the aid of a microscope.
- 2) In assisted hatching, the zona pellucida (the "egg shell" surrounding the early embryo) of specifically chosen embryos is partially removed. This is usually performed by using acidified medium to carefully dissolve a small opening in the zona pellucida. This small hole will later allow the growing embryo to "hatch" from the "egg shell" and thereby increase the chance for implantation. Additionally, cytoplasmic fragments may also be removed to improve the viability of the embryo. This procedure will normally be performed three days after egg retrieval.

RISKS OF THE PROCEDURE

- 1) Understand that with any technique necessitating mechanical support systems, equipment failure can occur. Neither the IVF team nor GMC are to be held liable for any destruction, damage caused by or resulting from any malfunction of the micromanipulation equipment or failure of utilities.
- 2) It appears unlikely that mechanical manipulation of the embryos during AH should lead to structural abnormalities in liveborn children. Current data provide no evidence for such an effect of AH.

- 3) There is greater risk of mechanical damage to the embryo during these micromanipulation procedures and accidents may result in lost or damaged embryos.

ALTERNATIVES

The Physicians have reviewed the alternatives to this procedure with us, including the risks and benefits of these alternatives.

CONFIDENTIALITY

We understand that GMC and the Physicians are actively involved in medical education and research. We agree that information concerning our treatment may be used in medical publications provided that our identities or identifying information is not revealed. All procedures carried out under this program will remain confidential between the involved couple and professional personnel.