

Causes of Increasing Rate of Female Infertility in India

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Abstract: Infertility is rising at a rapid rate. It is estimated that globally 60-80 million couples suffer from infertility every year, of which probably between 15-20 millions (25%) are in India alone. As per the study published at the end of the 2012 by WHO one in every four couples in developing countries had been found to be affected by infertility. Considering the current population statistics of India this would extrapolate to a humongous burden to the society. The population in developed, developing and underdeveloped countries hold different attitudes regarding infertility. In underdeveloped and developing countries, infertility may be linked to an act of God, punishment for sins of the past, prolonged use of contraceptives, distinct dietary habits and the result of witchcraft which is causing childlessness whereas people in developed countries viewed infertility as caused by biological and other related factors.

Keywords: Infertility, Causes, Symptoms

1. Introduction

Today couples plan their life and take decisions about having a baby very carefully and wait until the time is just right to expand their family. Most couples assume that once they stop using birth control pills, pregnancy will happen right away. Although this is somewhat true and occurs without difficulty for the majority of couples, but for some conceiving becomes difficult. At least 15% of couples will experience some degree of infertility. Many couples who do not conceive easily have specific problems causing their infertility. These problems can be quite involved and may be related to the woman, the man or both partners. Traditionally infertility has largely been attributed to the female and it has been the common belief that women are the culprits. However, in reality, it affects men and women almost equally. In 40% of cases the problem is attributable to the male, in 40% the problem is traced to the female. In about 10% of cases, fertility problems are linked to both partners. The remaining 10% of infertility is unexplained, even after exhaustive testing. Therefore, it is important for both partners to be aware of the causes of infertility and discuss the problems together with the doctor.

2. Research Methodology

Uttar Pradesh (UP) is one of the major states of India having largest population of the country. Kanpur and Lucknow are the two metropolitan cities of UP in which peoples educational status and way of living style is changing day by day. Because of being so carrier oriented, they delay the plan of marriage and having baby that cause problems in further conceiving. That's why the incidence of infertility among women increasing rapidly. In the study total 1000 infertile women surveyed through questionnaire method to identify the symptoms and causes of infertility among women. The study was conducted in the infertility treatment centers of Kanpur and Lucknow district.

3. Result & Discussion

For most of the women, the first symptom of infertility is when after a year of unprotected sex, they can't get pregnant. It is possible to have regular cycles, a healthy sex life, not have any of the risk factors, be generally healthy and still suffer from infertility. But for some women, there are early warning signs or symptoms that may hint to a fertility problem.

Table 1.1: Symptoms of Infertility among women

S.No.	Symptoms	Kanpur	Lucknow	Total
1	Irregular Cycles	208 (20.8)	192 (19.2)	400 (40.0)
2	Bleed, extremely heavily or lightly	162 (16.2)	180 (18.0)	342 (34.2)
3	Older than 35	98 (9.8)	86 (8.6)	184 (18.4)
4	Partner experience impotence	28 (2.8)	28 (2.8)	56 (5.6)
5	Underweight	84(8.4)	126 (12.6)	210 (21.0)
6	Overweight	48(4.8)	98 (9.8)	146 (14.6)
7	Earlier Miscarriages	148 (14.8)	108 (10.8)	256 (25.6)
8	History of Sexually Transmitted Disease	18 (1.8)	72 (7.2)	90 (9.0)
9	Have any chronic illness like diabetes, thyroid problems or hypertension.	66 (6.6)	65 (6.5)	131 (13.1)
10	None of the above	48 (4.8)	20 (2.0)	68 (6.8)

Table 1.1 reveals the symptoms that hint the signs of infertility among women. 40% of the women experienced the problem of irregular cycles as one of the most important symptom of infertility, followed by 34.2% of women who had extremely heavily or light bleeding during menstrual cycle. 25.6% women had earlier miscarriages whereas 21% of women were underweight. 18.4% women, trying to conceive were older than 35 years.14.6% respondent were overweight while 13.1% women were suffered from thyroid, diabetes and hypertension like diseases. 9% women had been faced some kind of sexually transmitted disease and 6.8% had experienced none of the above sins as the hint of infertility. Only 5.6% women said that their partner experienced impotent during sex.

4. Causes of Infertility in Women

It is difficult to determine what could be the cause of infertility in women or female infertility. In order to get pregnant it is required that women ovulate regularly i.e. have a normal menstruation cycle. The female reproductive cycle includes the release of the mature egg from the ovary, fertilization of the egg and implantation and growth of the egg in the uterus. The causes of infertility generally derive from three major sources: physiological dysfunctions, preventable factors and unexplained issues.

Table 1.2: Causes identified for infertility in women

S. No.	Causes	Yes	No
1	Pelvic Inflammatory Disease	74 (7.4)	926 (92.6)
2	Uterine Problems	168 (16.8)	832 (83.2)
3	Advanced Maternal Age	290 (29.0)	710 (71.0)
4	Ovulation disorders	206 (20.6)	794 (79.4)
5	Premature ovarian failure	168 (16.8)	832 (83.2)
6	Poor egg quality	470 (47.0)	530 (53.0)
7	Problems in uterus or fallopian tube	375 (37.5)	625 (62.5)
8	Surgery	14 (1.4)	986 (98.6)
9	Sub mucosal fibroids	50 (5.0)	950 (95.0)
10	Endometriosis	145 (14.5)	855 (85.5)
11	Chemotherapy	2 (0.2)	998 (99.8)
12	Medications	7(0.7)	993 (99.3)
13	Not identified	0	1000 (100)

Table 1.2 shows the causes responsible for infertility among women. From the findings, poor egg quality (47%) was found the main cause of infertility. 37.5% women had problems in their uterus and fallopian tube and was identified as second major cause of infertility among women. 29% women were of above 35 years and 20.6% women had ovulation disorders. 16.8% women had the uterine problem and premature ovarian failure problem while 14.5% women were suffered from endometriosis. Pelvic inflammatory disease was the cause of infertility in 7.4% women while sub mucosal fibroids among 5% cases. Side effects of medications (0.7%) and chemotherapy (0.2%) were found as a cause of infertility in rare cases.

Suitable measures to prevent infertility in women

- Avoid caffeine, drugs, smoking, and alcohol.
- Try to get pregnant before 35.
- Develop healthy life style
- Maintain healthy body weight
- Minimize exposure to toxic chemicals
- Avoid junk food
- Be safe in sexual lifestyle
- Don't avoid earlier sins of infertility
- Use contraceptives under the guidance of doctor
- Avoid stress
- Go to routine checkups

5. Conclusion

Great strides are being made in the diagnosis and treatment of infertility. About 65% of the couples who seek medical help eventually succeed in having children. Depending on the underlying cause, many relatively simple and affordable procedures are available to treat infertility. If females are having trouble in conceiving, the best opportunity for

evaluation and treatment is to take consultancy from a physician with a special interest and expertise in the area of infertility. The treatment for infertility will depend on the diagnosis and possible cause of infertility.

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