

# **Indian Fertility Society**

E-mail: indianfertilitysocietydelhi@gmail.com • Website: www.indianfertilitysociety.org Society Registered U/S 80G-DEL-IE25280-02072014/5103, Dated 02/07/2014, IFS PAN No: AAATI 5069D

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May 18,2016

CERTIFIED TRUE COPY OF THE RESOLUTION PASSED BY GOVERNING COUNCIL OF INDIAN FERTILITY SOCIETY AT ITS DULY CONVENED MEETING AND AT WHICH A PROPER QUORUM ( 18 MEMBERS) WAS PRESEENT HELD ON 17.05.16 AT 5 PM.

Sub- News Report in "Hindustan Times New Delhi" dated May 10, 2016

"IVF helps Septuagenarians become first time parents"

With reference to the recently published above mentioned news report ,the undersigned, on behalf of the Governing Council of Indian Fertility Society (IFS), wish to convey our firm and undivided opinion, that IFS strongly condemns the use of ART/ IVF technology in such patients. We fully agree and support the recommendations by ICMR that IVF treatment shall be limited to only up to 50/55 years age group couple at the maximum. The view is endorsed due to well acknowledged serious health risks to the mother as well as due to potential serious impact on physical, psychological and social well being of the child to be born out of such treatment, apart from the question of financial security.

The IFS strongly rejects all justification whatsoever to support such practices, which will go down in the history, as a dark spot against all good work being carried out by thousands of infertility practitioners in our country. This highly controversial case however raises several very uncomfortable and disturbing questions which simply cannot be brushed aside under the carpet, putting all blame on a particular doctor or a single IVF centre as no law has been broken by them and as proclaimed by them IVF treatment was carried out in good faith for their patient and that particular section of society they work for. As concerned responsible citizens, if we really want to get to the root cause of this problem, we ourselves and the society as a whole, must address following questions-

- 1. What drives a 72 years old woman to opt for the tremendous hardship of pregnancy, childbirth and months of sleepless nights which most of the 30 year something will consider too exhaustive and harder than any other full time job in the world?
- 2. What drives a septuagenarian couple to subject themselves to more than 2 years of stressful infertility treatment and make a 24 x 7 commitment, when their most other counterparts would be enjoying a relaxed, tension free life with just enough energy to cope with minimal essential physical activity?

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Is it the simple greed or the pressure to have a baby, especially on women, is so huge that everything else in comparison appears easier? And who is to be blamed for it- the woman, her husband or the society?

- 3. Why is the risk of losing their share of inherited money / property so important to this septuagenarian couple to justify their decision for such drastic steps at this phase of their lives? Is it not the inability of the state / country to provide financial security and dignity to all its senior citizens and the absence of same is one of the main reasons for this obsession of many couples to have a child at no matter how much are the risks?
- 4. Most importantly why is there still no ART Regulation Law despite ICMR thinking about it since 2005 (ICMR guidelines 2005)? During this 11 year period, IVF clinics have increased hundred folds in number but the pace at which our law making system has moved over the same duration is most astonishing.

The same clinic earlier made headlines all over the world in 2006 with the news of a 70 year old woman giving birth to an IVF baby, but nothing material has been done in effect to have prevented such practices.

It is not just a question of one couple, one baby or one doctor, there must be thousands of other similar couples in same vulnerable circumstances getting lured into undergoing years of infertility treatment which they ignorantly assume, will end all miseries of their lives. Those who do get pregnant, then face the challenge of putting their own and their baby's lives at considerable risks and suffering.

The law making authorities should have woken up long ago. The most important undeniable need of the hour is for the government authorities to sit together with the IVF service providers and finalize the draft ART Bill 2014 to make it practical as well as efficient enough to protect and take care of the interests of all stake holders and implement it as a law on a most urgent priority.

Meanwhile, the doctors need to realize that IVF technology is not the magical cure for all sins and ills of the society.IFS recommends all its members to strictly refrain themselves from succumbing to the emotional blackmail and psychological pressures put upon them by the patients and refuse all such treatments, which are clearly and totally against interests of the society.

Dr Sohani Verma President-IFS

Dr K D Nayar Secretary General- IFS

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