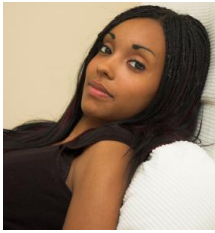


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By: Stefan Anitei, Science Editor



Contraceptive Pills Can Schedule Ovulation

For IVF egg harvesting

Over 15% of the couples in developed countries experience fertility issues. The last resort for women troubled by this is in vitro fertilization (IVF). But timing can be a big problem, as from holidays to work, all must be planned around the egg harvesting. A new research made at the Tel Aviv University and published in the "Journal of Assisted Reproduction & Genetics" could change this, and all based on the same pill meant to prevent pregnancy.

The team led by Dr. Haim Pinkas, a senior physician at the Rabin Medical Center and an academic staff member of Tel Aviv University's Sackler School of Medicine, discovered that a two-week intervention treatment employing a common low-dose birth control pill can control the time of egg harvesting, making the task easier for both doctor and patient.

"One of the main drawbacks in treating infertility is timing a woman's body with the clinic's schedule, so we can get as many mature eggs as possible. IVF clinics can be extremely busy. With a proven and safe method for timing when a woman can undergo therapy, there is a lot less stress placed on the physicians' shoulders too," said Pinkas.

IVF treatment is normally started when a woman gets her period, but by employing the birth control pills for 10-14 days after a period, the treatment was adjusted without affecting the "ovarian response to stimulation," said Pinkas.

The method allowed egg-harvesting on a date mutually convened by both the clinician and patient. This is the largest research investigating the use of contraceptive pill in IVF, being made on 1,800 women, and it has focused on patients' age, their ovarian responses, their cycle characteristics and the result (the baby).

"The IVF process can be very stressful. Adding to that stress is the timing issue. Women need to be able to get on with their lives. This treatment makes it possible. The timing of ovulation for different women is spaced out evenly throughout the year. We can schedule a woman's ovulation with contraceptive pills," said Pinkas.