



Controlled Ovarian Hyperstimulation

A common infertility treatment is called Controlled Ovarian Hyperstimulation. The ovaries are stimulated to produce more mature follicles which will improve pregnancy rates. Two medications are frequently used.

Clomiphene Citrate is a series of pills taken for 5 days starting cycle days 2 to 5. The desired hope is to have 2, 3 or 4 follicles to ovulate. There is a slight increase in twins, but no higher order of multiple pregnancies.

Gonadotropins (FSH) are daily self-administered injections. These are started usually on cycle day 3 or 4 and are taken for 6-9 days. The follicle growth is monitored by measuring estrogen levels and vaginal ultrasounds. When the follicles are optimal, ovulation is induced using an injection of HCG. There is a higher rate of multiple pregnancies. A single child occurs 80% of the time. Twins occur in 15% and triplets or more occur in 5% of hyperstimulation cycles.

Other medications can be used to induce ovulation in certain endocrine abnormalities. Women with increase prolactin levels may not ovulate. The use of a drug called bromocryptine (Parlodel) or cabergoline (Dostinex) have been successful in lowering prolactin levels and inducing ovulation.

Women with polycystic ovary syndrome (PCOS) often have irregular or no ovulation. Successful ovulation and pregnancy have occurred with the use of a drug called Metformin (glucophage). Metformin lowers insulin resistance and it decreases production of glucose from the liver. Often it will be used in conjunction with Clomiphene citrate.