

SURVIVING THE ROLLERCOASTER: Coping with infertility

Introduction to infertility & it's effects

What is it?

The inability to conceive after a year of well-timed intercourse (or inseminations)

Women over 35 are urged to seek help if not pregnant after six months of trying, due to the rapid loss of fertility at that age

How prevalent?

One in six couples

Over five million people of childbearing age in the US experience infertility.

What are the emotional effects?

Disappointment and hope follows the monthly cycle

Depression peaks at two—three years

Dealing with friends and relatives

People are ignorant, although usually well-intentioned

Stupid & insensitive things people have said:

Create a plan for "how to tell me"

Say no to invites when you need to

Plan escapes

Coping list

Think it through logically

Your intimate relationship

Usually first really big challenge

Effects of depression on marriage/relationship

Women and men handle stress of infertility differently

Medications affect coping

Baby desire

Virility, image of sexuality

Withdrawal as a way to be strong for other

Infertility and your work / career

It's hard to focus on work when you just want a baby

Performance slips, which causes more stress

Scheduling medical appts, etc.

Does work stress cause infertility?

Studies say no

Depression decreases fertility, however

Should you tell?

Confidentiality pros and cons

Coping techniques

Relaxation response-inducing methods:

Meditation

Yoga

Mindfulness

Deep breathing

Repetitive prayer

Body scan

Progressive muscle relaxation

Autogenic training

Guided imagery

Cognitive Therapy

Group

Individual

Coping skills to manage stress

Self-nurturance

Social support

Problem solving

Emotional expression

Journaling

Assertiveness training & communication skills

Finances

What if treatment doesn't work?

"Public celebrations and private sorrows"

The hidden failures, the real stats

Coping with failure

Take breaks to relax, recharge, re-evaluate

The heartbreak of miscarriage

When to stop?