



RECURRENT LOSS OR FAILURE AFTER IVF, COULD IT BE ABNORMAL IMMUNOLOGY?

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When sperm meets egg, creating an embryo, an individual, genetically different from the mother, is nurtured within the uterus until delivery. Fortunately, the maternal immune system responds in a protective way in the majority of pregnancies. In some pregnancies, the implanting embryo elicits an aggressive response and this abnormal response can result in failure to implant, very early loss as in a chemical pregnancy, first trimester miscarriage or even placental insufficiency and decreased fetal growth in the second and third trimester.

Patients who conceive without any assistance, but have recurrent pregnancy loss, were the first studied by Dr. Alan Beer and other reproductive immunologists. In these patients, **autoantibodies** like phospholipid or thyroid antibodies and **specialized lymphocytes** like natural killer cells may damage the delicate vessels and blood supply of the early placenta, causing clotting in the vessels and pregnancy loss. In addition, some patients may inherit a condition that predisposes to clotting in small vessels and this is known as an inherited thrombophilia.

Certain patients who have recurrent loss or repeated failure with IVF treatment, may have abnormalities within this system of autoantibodies and natural killer cells or an inherited thrombophilia that can be identified and treated prior to initiating another IVF cycle. Testing for these factors may indicate abnormalities that can be corrected with the addition of baby aspirin, Heparin or Lovenox, or in the case of natural killer cells, the addition of anti-inflammatory agents like Humira, developed to treat rheumatoid arthritis as well as intravenous gamma globulin (IVIG) and Intralipid.

If you have suffered recurrent pregnancy loss after IVF or failure of apparently good IVF cycles, you should gather your medical records and set up a complementary telephone consultation so that I may evaluate your case to see if any of these therapies may be beneficial in your case. For more information please email our patient services department at info@goivf.com