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November 18, 2003

Sophisticated Test Improves Odds of Pregnancy

New York Times Syndicate
Carolyn Susman

Infertile couples battling with the question of "why" may find some answers in a new test that determines whether the woman's uterine lining is healthy enough to support a pregnancy.

The new endometrial function test was created by a research scientist at Yale School of Medicine, Dr. Harvey Kliman (www.info.med.yale.edu/obgyn/kliman), and it more accurately assesses endometrial condition than the exams currently done, according to a Yale press release.

"These findings will help women who have difficulty conceiving become pregnant at a reduced cost," Kliman promises in a related statement.

"This test, which uses new biochemical markers, will improve assessment of the endometrium."

That would be good news for women who have gone through fertility testing and fertilization procedures and haven't ended up with a baby. The answer may lie in a more sophisticated endometrial evaluation.

Dr. Kenneth M. Gelman, an infertility specialist with offices in Hollywood, Fla., and Cooper City, Fla., is offering the test and thinks it will be a godsend for some couples who are frustrated in their attempts to conceive.

"I see a lot of women who either want to know that they're fertile or are seeking a more definitive assessment of their endometrial health," he says.

The new test could be a first-line evaluation for some would-be moms, especially women under 35 who are having problems conceiving.

It involves biopsy of the endometrial tissues, one or two times during the menstrual cycle - which may or may not be covered by health insurance. The procedure costs an average of \$350 per biopsy.

"The EFT can help guide the infertility specialist to fix the problem, which in turn will improve the chances of implantation and a successful pregnancy," researcher Kliman said.

But for those who have given up on conceiving and are considering adoption - especially overseas - a new book might be useful.

Welcome Home! An International and Nontraditional Adoption Reader (Haworth, \$24.95) presents the pros and cons of adopting children outside the United States, children with special needs, and children from a different racial or cultural background.

Prospective parents are advised to get videos of their children before adoption, for example, for a medical analysis, and to take the child to a pediatrician as soon as possible once the adoption is completed.

Co-author Florence Kaslow, a Palm Beach Gardens, Fla., psychologist, adds a chapter at the end of her book - which is a compilation of personal experiences from several parents with international and interracial adoptions -

that recognizes the problems of such adoptions, particularly health concerns, but adds hope.

Regarding children with developmental delays, whatever the cause, Kaslow reports that the children ``caught up quickly once they felt secure and received a great deal of love, attention and stimulation. Many spurt ahead of the norm and become achievers."

There are no guarantees, of course. Children can be a challenge, no matter how you finally get them.

(The Cox web site is at <http://www.coxnews.com>)

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