The Fertility Experiences Study: recruitment for a population-based study of infertility treatment

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Background
• 7.4% of couples in the USA experience infertility (NSFG, 2010).
• 11.9% of couples have ever received infertility services (NFSG, 2010).
• Of couples who received any fertility services, only 0.3% received IVF (NCHS, 2002).
• Most outcome studies focused on IVF.
• Different fertility treatments may have similar cumulative rates of live birth.
• Most research involves clinic-based sampling, with unknown applicability to the general population.

Purpose
Compare time to pregnancy and birth outcomes in women with primary infertility who have received different fertility treatments, including no treatment, and evaluate outcomes associated with infertility treatment rather than associated with infertility.

Methods
• Retrospective cohort study
• Fertility Experiences Questionnaire
• Mixed methods questionnaire
• Online component
• Follow-up telephone interview
  • Treatments, timing, pregnancy, and outcomes.

Population Cohort
Utah Population Database (UPDB) includes driver license, marriage certificates, birth certificates, and fetal death records.
• Identify women with possible infertility.
  • Married 2-5 years (same partner) by 2004
  • No live birth or fetal death record before 2005
• Maintain participant privacy via Resource for Genetic and Epidemiologic Research (RGE), which makes initial contact.

Clinic Cohort
• Two specialized fertility clinics in Utah
• Screen for primary infertility

Population Cohort
• Lived in Utah at index date
• No pregnancies prior to index date
• Male partner on index date
• 12+ months of trying

Clinic Cohort
• Lived in Utah at index date
• Seen at UCRM or RCC
• No pregnancy prior to first clinic visit
• Male partner on index date
• 12+ months of trying

Participating fertility clinics identify women who were more likely to receive IVF and other medical treatment.

Categories of Treatment
• In vitro Fertilization (IVF) with or without Intracytoplasmic Sperm Injection (ICSI).
• Artificial Insemination (AI) with partner or donor semen.
• Ovulation Enhancing Drugs include oral or injectable drugs, including but not limited to clomiphene and gonadotropin medications.
• No Medical Treatment may include monitoring indicators of fertility such as basal body temperatures or cervical fluid. May also include diet efforts, herbal supplements, and acupuncture.

Discussion
• Population Cohort includes many women with infertility who never received medical help.
• Clinic Cohort provides the sample size needed to assess outcomes associated with medical treatment, especially IVF.
• Assessment of treatment includes interview data.
• Both Clinic and Population cohorts are able to link to UPDB for birth certificate outcomes as a gold standard.
• FES data and methods may be useful for future prospective infertility studies involving population cohorts.

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