



MediCare

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INFERTILITY

It is a local tradition to expect couples to have children soon after they are married. However, young people are getting married at a later age these days and quite a number of them would not want to have children.

Despite this modern day trend, infertility is still a fairly common health and family problem, affecting one in six married couples in Hong Kong. Infertility is considered if, under normal circumstances, a couple cannot conceive after one year. This makes the couple very stressful, affecting their daily life, mood, sleep and even the health of the body, as well as social life. In most cases, a cause cannot be identified. In about half of the cases, the problem of infertility is in the woman, while a third is related to the man. Hence we should not always blame the wife.

Young couples have to work very hard to save for the expensive property, to secure the jobs, and to start a family. Nowadays, women are playing key roles in the society and hence many spend much of their energy in the career, and thus having and raising children is not a priority as in the older generation. Moreover, busy city life has much to do with infertility. Stress has led to not only many health and mental problems, but also affecting sexual desire and married life. This is compounded by the lack of time and leisure, making the chance of conception even more remote.

The couple should stop smoking and drinking as a prime remedial measure. Organic cause, such as abnormal conditions of the sex organs like erectile dysfunction, varicocele, blocked spermatic cord, abnormal sperms, abnormal menses, dysmenorrhoea, endometriosis, polycystic ovary, uterine fibroid, blocked fallopian tubes, etc, need to be excluded and managed. Then assisted reproductive programmes may be considered and they have a successful rate of 30 to 40%, being lower with older age of the woman. On the other hand, advanced age comes with higher incidence of common chronic diseases, which affects fertility. Optimal body weight and regular exercise are helpful to the infertile couples.