

YOUR BIOLOGICAL CLOCK REALITY CHECK, TALK TO YOUR DOCTOR

Ottawa, May 24, 2017 - The Society of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists of Canada (SOGC) has published a new Clinical Practice Guideline urging physicians to start talking to women as early as their 20s about the realities of their biological clock and the effects of age on reproductive potential.

Many Canadian couples choose, or are forced by circumstances, to delay child-bearing into their 30s and 40s - a time when women and men experience a natural decline in their fertility. The new guideline, [Advanced Reproductive Age and Fertility](#), appears on the *Journal of Obstetrics and Gynaecology Canada* (JOGC) website at www.jogc.com. The guideline also cautions that assisted reproductive technology (ART) is not a fail-proof method to set back the clock.

Ovarian function declines as women approach their later reproductive years until menopause - with the average age of menopause varying widely from about age 40 to 60. Although ART may be able to aid some couples with fertility issues, success rates for women using their own eggs are directly linked to the age of the woman. Odds of pregnancy are higher if a woman with an age-related decline in ovarian reserve undergoing treatment is using eggs from a younger donor. ART is also regarded as an invasive procedure and is an expensive option that is not covered by most provincial health insurance plans.

The guideline recommends prior to any ART, a woman 35 or older should be evaluated after six months of infertility. It also supports ovarian reserve testing to be performed for 35 or younger if they have known risk factors for decreased ovarian reserve. The guideline also cautions that ovarian reserve testing is helpful for counseling but does not predict the chances of spontaneous pregnancy or pregnancy from ART.

The guideline also underscores that complications of pregnancy increase for both the mother and the baby with advanced maternal age. The SOGC urges women to consult their physicians for more information and treatment.

This guideline revises and updates the original guideline released in November 2011.

About The Society of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists of Canada

The SOGC is one of Canada's oldest national specialty organizations. Established in 1944, the Society's mission is to promote excellence in the practice of obstetrics and gynaecology and to advance the health of women through leadership, advocacy, collaboration and education. The SOGC represents obstetricians/gynaecologists, family physicians, nurses, midwives and allied health professionals working in the field of sexual reproductive health. For more information visit www.sogc.org.

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