

ONE MILLION CYCLES IN THE GERMAN IVF-REGISTRY

K. Bühler

Centre for Gynaecological Endocrinology & Reproductive Medicine, Langenhagen & Wolfsburg, Germany

In our clinical work, we have always to look about efficacy and effectiveness. Therefore we need investigations. In order to be able to give answers to the question: "Does it work?" we need Randomised Controlled Trials and therefrom derived Meta Analyses. Those investigations, RCT and MA, need a high degree of standardisation, specific patient groups and strict treatment conditions to achieve finally statistical evidence. However, these more mathematical results are not always transferable in our clinical engagement. There, we have to ask: "How does it work?" In our daily work we dispose very seldom over "the ideal patient" and suitable conditions. Therefore we need systematic data collections which has been established in Germany in the field of reproductive medicine since 1982, the year when the first baby was born after IVF treatment in Germany. In 1996 a reorganisation was performed and data transfer was executed only by electronic way allowing a prospective data collection. Since 1998 it is mandatory for all centres to report their data to the national registry: Deutsches IVF-Register. Between 1997 and 2009 883.540 cycles were collected; since 1982 all in all 1.048.745. Now, more than 90% of the data of the OPU cycles are collected prospectively, meaning the cycle is opened in the computer within the first 8 days of stimulation. When in 1996 in all stimulation cycles urinary gonadotrophins were used, in 2008 h-recFSH was used in 74% of the stimulation cycles. The GnRHa long protocol was utilised in 74% in 1996 and in 55% in 2007; in 2008, GnRH antagonist was applied in 12.475 (31%) OPU-cycles. In the first yearbook 1996 a pregnancy rate of 24,1% per transfer (PR/ET) in IVF treatment and of 23,7% for ICSI were reported. In 2008 the PR/ET were 30,1% and resp. 28,8% for prospectively collected cycles. The mean age of the women increased during 1997 - 2008 from 32,6 years to 34,7 years that means that meanwhile more than 50% of all treated women are 35 years and older. This is also due to political influences. Since 2004, the couples have to pay 66% of the costs themselves compared with the situation before. The National Health Care Service reduced the supported treatment cycles from 4 to 3 and reimburses only 50% of the cycle costs. The so called embryo protection law ("Embryonen-Schutz-Gesetz) is very restrictive in Germany. The quantity of developing embryos per cycle is restricted to that number intended for transfer and at maximum 3. Despite these unfavourable legal conditions, also due to continuous educational engagement of the registry, since 1997 a decrease of 16% - 18% concerning the mean number of transferred embryos can be observed. This yielded in a reduction of the proportion of triplets to all the children born after ART of more than 82%. The frequency of severe OHSS decreased in the observation period from 4,3% to 0,5%. Since 2009 the annual is also published in English: Annual 2009 - German IVF Registry, *J Reproduktionsmed Endokrinol* 2010; 7:470-97. The tremendous high number of patients and cases included in such great databases allows systematic reflections on different treatment options in our daily clinical work.