

## Improving Chances For Pregnancy

From the News 13 Newsroom

Posted: 5/5/04

Once a woman reaches the age of 35, infertility problems can become more common.

For those who turn to invitro fertilization, a new study shows there is a way to make it more successful.

That's important since invitro doesn't always work the first time, and it can become a costly and emotional ride.

Doctors now are combining a genetic diagnosis with IVF.

When Kelly and Zubair Sheikh's son Joshua was finally born, they were more than thrilled.

The Sheikh's spent years trying to get pregnant.

Kelly's doctor recommended the couple try invitro fertilization using PGD or pre-implantation genetic diagnosis to increase their chances of having a successful pregnancy.

PGD has been primarily used to look for genetic defects such as cystic fibrosis.

But now, reproductive endocrinologists say it can also help pick out the healthiest embryo for invitro fertilization.

The experts say PGD helps determine whether an embryo has the right number of chromosomes.

According to a new study led by Dr. Lawrence Werlin, two-thirds of the embryos in many older women don't have the 46 chromosomes needed for a healthy baby.

The PGD procedure uses special probes to look at the embryos cells under a microscope.

Doctors then implant the embryos back into the uterus.

Avoiding implanting the abnormal embryos increases a woman's chance of getting pregnant, and helps ensure a chromosomally healthy baby.

Experts say PGD can add about \$3,500 to the cost of IVF, and there is a slight risk that the embryo can be damaged by the biopsy that must be done to examine the embryo's cells to be sure they are normal.