

New Study Minimizes Concerns about PGD's Impact on Embryos and Offers Encouraging Data on Implantation Success Rates

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Lawrence Werlin Presents New Study at Pacific Coast Reproductive Society's Annual Conference

IRVINE, Calif.--(BUSINESS WIRE)--May 3, 2005--At the Pacific Coast Reproductive Society's (PCRS) Annual Conference, Dr. Lawrence B. Werlin will present groundbreaking discoveries from his research on the effects of Preimplantation Genetic Diagnosis (PGD) on embryos. The conference, May 4-8, 2005, in Indian Wells, Calif., brings together leaders in the field of reproductive medicine throughout North America and abroad.

PGD is a therapeutic and genetic testing tool that allows for the analysis and transfer of healthy embryos back to the uterus. Over the years, PGD has gained greater recognition for its ability to analyze the cells of a developing embryo via biopsy for genetic and chromosomal abnormalities. The new study presents data that validates that if a woman's embryos, that have undergone Preimplantation Genetic Diagnosis (PGD) and have not progressed to the blastocyst stage by day five, may still be implanted and result in a successful pregnancy.

Fertility specialists have increasingly focused their efforts around the appropriate transfer date of an embryo to minimize risks and increase implantation success rates; according to Werlin, PGD is normally performed on day-three embryos. Typically, an embryo achieves the blastocyst stage when embryonic cells have divided and increased exponentially, and the embryo has become a mass of hundreds of cell divisions, by day number five or day number six.

"Until now, if an embryo had not formed a blastocyst by day five, it was not considered for implantation," Werlin said. "The fear was that PGD would traumatize the embryo, or potentially cause a problem with its ability to develop normally. Our study indicates that biopsying an embryo before it reaches the blastocyst stage does not appear to be jeopardizing the embryo's potential for implantation and pregnancy."

Werlin's study shows that embryos which have undergone PGD and not reached blastocyst formation by day five still have a reasonable likelihood for implantation and achievement for successful pregnancy.

"This is exciting news for women as it provides them with the opportunity to implant embryos that may have been previously dismissed as inadequate," Werlin said. "Patients should be encouraged to transfer previously biopsied embryos, regardless of whether or not the embryo has reached the blastocyst stage."

Werlin is a leader in reproductive technology, research, and education and client services. He is founder and director of Coastal Fertility Medical Center (<http://www.coastalfertility.com>), with offices in Irvine and Aliso Viejo, Calif. He is also the principal investigator for GENESIS Network for Reproductive Health (<http://www.genesisivf.com>), a team of nationally noted fertility specialists.

Note to Editors: Arrange interviews with Dr. Lawrence Werlin by calling (949) 726-0600 or by email at asantana@coastalfertility.com

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