

Survey on issues on sub-fertile couples attending the Teaching Hospital, Peradeniya

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Subfertility is usually defined as the failure of a couple to conceive after one year of regular unprotected intercourse. Subfertility is known to have adverse effects on health, finance, occupation, social, mental, and sexual health compared to a fertile counterpart. It is important to study it.

A descriptive cross sectional study was conducted among sub fertile couples coming to the ward 3 and the gynecological clinic in the Teaching Hospital, Peradeniya. Data collected by self-administered questionnaires, was analyzed by SPSS.

According to the study conducted, only 14% of the women were aged above 35y, whereas 43% men were above 35y. A majority of the women had passed A/L accounting to 43%. In contrast to that, a majority of the men's highest educational qualification was O/L: 39%. Interestingly 92% of women were unemployed, whereas 21% of men earned less than Rs. 20000. 42% of women and men were married for more than 5y. Another important point was that 64% women were having primary subfertility and only 28% of them did not have any medical advice up to this point. Also, 88% men had mumps. A majority of couples were from within 100km range from the hospital, and 71% of them were travelling by the public transport system. 71% of husbands were coming to the hospital every time. A majority (78%) was spending less than Rs. 1000 for each visit. 10% of women were found to have depressive features and major symptoms were low mood accounting to 32%. But 18% of men had depressive features and the most prevalent symptom was irritability. Good family support was received by 50% of the women and men.

This reveals a minority of sub fertile women have reached advance maternal age which would be a risk. A majority is having primary subfertility and some of them show a delay in seeking medical advice. Less research has been done on men's reactions to subfertility, but they tend to report experiencing less distress than women. In contrast to that, our study shows that men are having more depressive features because of subfertility.

Due to the nature of subfertility, attention to the quality of life by means of impact of sub fertility in these couples has equal importance to different treatment programs.