

The decision to conceive a child is often one of the most anticipated and exciting moments in a woman's life. But if the desired pregnancy becomes a challenge, that journey can become an emotional rollercoaster of frustration and disappointment.

Sometimes women have outdated ideas about infertility treatment options, and many of them are not receiving either the support or the results that are possible with better information. There have been such significant advancements made in protocols and technology in the treatment of infertility issues that 85 to 90% of them are now fully treatable says Mark R. Bush, MD, FACOG, FACS, of Conceptions Reproductive Associates of Colorado.

I visited the Conceptions office in Littleton. I think the large waiting area feels more like someone's living room than a medical office.

I chatted with Business Development Director Dana Ackerman, who has been working at Conceptions for several years. "We really care about each one of our patients," she tells me. "In addition to our medical expertise we have a Mind/Body health program.

As patients walked past us, everyone was greeted on a first name basis. They exchanged information about vacations, children, and other personal tidbits with the staff.

Dr. Bush's energy and enthusiasm were immediately apparent to me. It was also evident that he is tremendously passionate about his work. I met with Dr. Bush to better understand what sets his team apart from other physicians working in the field of infertility. Conceptions specializes in helping women and couples unlock the miracle of life through compassion, understanding and support, Dr. Bush explains. By specializing in leading-edge technology and utilizing advanced medical expertise, they are able to help many couples achieve success, he adds.

The team at Conceptions has been recognized by the Consumer's Guide to Top Doctors as being among the best in America. Dr. Bush lectures nationally on his innovative protocols in treating infertility. In addition to his certification in both obstetrics and gynecology and reproductive endocrinology and infertility, he is also a Fellow of the American College of Surgeons. His expertise is in hysteroscopy, laparoscopy, and open reproductive tract surgery.

The Conceptions team includes Michael S. Swanson, MD, FACOG. The staff's physicians are all experts in the field of infertility, Dr. Bush says. They have impressive credentials and competency in diagnosing the causes of infertility, and they obtain excellent results with their treatments.

Just as important as their abilities, however, is their commitment to providing each patient with compassionate, individualized care, Dr. Bush goes on to say. Including the nursing staff and the administrative staff, each Conceptions team member considers him or herself part of an extended family that assists clients in obtaining their dreams of parenthood.

"At Conceptions, we are able to do a comprehensive review of a woman's fertility status and diagnosis," Dr. Bush explains. "We are then able to review a number of therapies and do surgery, if required. This way we are providing quality control from diagnosis to conception. There is no disjointed care here. And this contributes to the optimism of our patients. I do a thorough workup on my clients, present their options and therapies, and then I let them decide the appropriate course. Because we are

thorough in defining a woman's options and do a comprehensive review of their fertility status, we have a number of therapies we can then recommend."

Conceptions offers a complete range of the most advanced treatments available, Dr. Bush adds. This includes Ovulation Induction (a medication that stimulates the ovaries to produce multiple eggs). Intrauterine insemination (placing sperm in the uterus). and other procedures.

One of the most technically advanced procedures as well as the most innovative according to Dr. Bush, is In Vitro Fertilization (IVF). During this procedure, the woman's eggs are surgically removed from the ovaries and are combined with sperm outside of the body. The healthy embryos are then placed into the woman's uterus. While Dr. Bush states that half of their patients become pregnant without the need to perform IVF, the procedure has made a significant impact in the field of infertility.

CONCEPTIONS REPRODUCTIVE ASSOCIATES OF COLORADO

By Kerry Workman



Mark R. Bush, M.D., FACOG, FACS
Michael S. Swanson, M.D., FACOG

Conceptions has taken IVF to another level. It has partnered with Gene Security Network to deliver highly accurate full-genome testing on small quantities of biological material. According to Dr. Bush, it is one of 11 centers nationally and the only center in Colorado to provide this advanced technology.

To fully understand this new technology and how it can potentially help infertile couples, it helps to understand the IVF process. Prior to implanting the fertilized embryo, there is a screening of the embryo to look for chromosome errors. Chromosome errors can impact the ability to conceive and deliver a healthy baby. Dr. Bush says, "The screening is particularly important for women over 35, for women with a prior history of miscarriage, or those who have had an unsuccessful IVF cycle."

The previous screening techniques were limited, looking at only seven to 11 chromosomes, Dr. Bush goes on to say. The new technology that Conceptions utilizes looks at all 24 chromosomes. This new technology allows careful scrutiny of each embryo, and the doctor then implants only one or two healthy ones. (For the last two reportable years, Conceptions' triplet rate was 0%)

There is another technology available in Colorado that looks at all 24 chromosomes. Comparative Genomic Hybridization (CGH) is less accurate, according to Dr. Bush, than the microarray analysis with Parental Support Technology that Conceptions utilizes. Also, CGH requires five days to complete requiring the embryo to be frozen.

Even with a dedicated team of professionals and leading-edge technology on your side for a successful pregnancy, the Conceptions staff understands how stressful working through the challenges can be to each individual and to a couple's relationship. Dr. Bush states. The American Fertility Association (AFA) states that while they can't say that stress causes infertility the stress of infertility is common. The Mind/Body health program at Conceptions can help manage this stress through counseling, proper nutrition, and alternative therapies like acupuncture and hypnosis. Many women have benefited from group therapy and support groups offered as part of this program, Dr. Bush says.

Conceptions accepts insurance, and it also offers discounted rates for clients covering the costs on their own. They are also recruiting women for IVF research studies. Conceptions has two locations: 271 West County Line Road in Littleton: 303-794-0045; and a Lafayette office at 300 Exempla Circle: 303-449-1084. For additional information, please visit www.conceptionsrepro.com.