

ART fact sheet

Background

- One in six couples worldwide experience some form of infertility problem at least once during their reproductive lifetime. The current prevalence of infertility lasting for at least 12 months is estimated to be around 9% worldwide for women aged 20-44.
- 20-30% of infertility cases are explained by physiological causes in men, 20-35% by physiological causes in women, and 25-40% of cases are because of a problem in both partners. In 10-20% no cause is found. Infertility is also associated with lifestyle factors such as smoking, body-weight and stress. Increasing age in the female partner is one of the most common explanations today.
- It is now estimated that more than 5.4 million babies have been born worldwide since the first IVF baby was born in 1978.
- Most ART treatments take place in women aged between 30 and 39.

Cycles/treatments

- Europe leads the world in ART, initiating approximately 50% of all reported treatment cycles.
- In 2012, the latest year for which figures are available, 639,782 treatment cycles were reported from 34 European countries. This compares globally (in 2012) with 176,247 cycles from the US and 70,082 cycles from Australia and New Zealand. The number of cycles performed in many developed countries has grown by 5-10% per annum over the last few years, but that growth is now showing signs of slowing.
- In 2012, France (85,487 cycles), Germany (71,251), Spain (67,869), the UK (60,621) and Italy (63,777) were Europe's most active countries. In the Nordic countries, Sweden leads the table with 18,077 cycles, followed by Denmark (15,171).
- The most active countries in the world are Japan (241,089 cycles in 2010) and the USA.

Availability of ART

- The global need for ART is estimated to be at least

1,500 cycles/million population per year.

- The Nordic countries and Belgium have the highest ART availability in terms of cycles per million population.
- In Belgium, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Iceland, Slovenia, and Sweden more than 3.0% of all babies born were conceived by ART. By contrast the proportion in the USA was estimated to be slightly more than 1% of total births.
- Around 1.6 million ART cycles are now performed each year worldwide, with an estimated 400,000 babies born.

Pregnancies and delivery rates

- An analysis of world data for 2010 put average delivery rate from ART treatment at 21.1% per aspiration and 26.8% cumulative from a single started treatment cycle.
- Large differences exist between countries in the number of embryos transferred and resulting multiple births. However, there is a consistent trend towards transfer of fewer embryos. The overall average number is 1.89 embryos per transfer.
- In Europe the multiple delivery rate per embryo transfer has declined steadily since 2000 from 26.9% to 18.1% in 2012.
- Sweden has the lowest multiple delivery rate in the world. In more than two-thirds of all cases a single embryo was transferred.
- In Europe in 2012 the mean pregnancy rate per embryo transfer was 29.4% after IVF, 27.7% after ICSI, 23.5% after frozen embryo transfer and 51.7% after egg donation. Rates are higher in younger (<35 years) patients.

Treatments

- The most common fertilisation (treatment) technique is ICSI. Overall, ICSI accounts for around two-thirds of all treatments worldwide, and conventional IVF around one-third. However, these proportions vary greatly between countries, even though outcome rates with each technique are comparable.
- Success rates from frozen embryo transfer are increasing, as are the number of FER cycles. Vitrification, as an efficient cryopreservation technique, has improved the outcome of both embryo and oocyte freezing.
- Ovarian hyperstimulation syndrome (OHSS) is the most common complication related to ART, with an incidence rate of about 1% reported.