



repromed Newsletter

AUTUMN 2009

Delivering excellent success rates

Repromed is committed to a team approach in assisted conception with highly qualified and experienced staff members providing infertility treatment options with holistic and personalised care.

The team includes reproductive specialists, general practitioners, highly-trained laboratory staff, fertility nurses and counsellors.

Latest evidence-based research is quickly embraced into clinical practice to give couples the best possible chance of achieving pregnancy and having a healthy baby.

Repromed's knowledge base is supported by quantitative data from the large number of couples seeking assisted conception at its units in Adelaide, Darwin, Mildura, Christchurch and Auckland. In assisted reproductive technology, size does matter. Success is based on the quality of the laboratory and its ability to review and refine procedures.

The higher the number of cases being undertaken, the better the ability of the laboratory to refine

its procedures and assess the outcomes. Small laboratories can take months to discover a problem. The success at Repromed lies in the stringent protocols, volume and benchmarking capabilities of the laboratory.

This information contributes to Repromed's culture of continuous improvement in laboratory and clinical practice, and in effective communication with those seeking treatment.

In 2008, 2,421 cycles of IVF were performed in Repromed's units in Adelaide, Darwin and Mildura.

Infertility treatment has never been so successful.

Repromed's latest cumulative pregnancy rates from IVF among women aged 38 or less are 54.8 percent on the first cycle, rising to 73.99 percent on the second cycle and 86.7 percent on the third cycle.

Pregnancy is defined as viable heart beat at an eight-week scan.

Prior to treatment, Repromed specialists explain likely chances of

success taking into consideration the type of infertility, age and treatment options.

Unique model of care

Repromed has built a unique partnership between general practitioners and infertility specialists.

Medical Director, Dr Richard Henshaw, said Repromed recognised the huge contribution that general practitioners, particularly GPs with a special interest in women's health and fertility, had to offer couples considering assisted reproductive technology.

"Due to the complexity of treatment, good communication is essential," he said.

"General practitioners are at the front line of care. They are good communicators who are empathetic and understanding of the needs of patients.

"Repromed has a team-based approach to care, utilising the skills of specialists and highly-trained generalist medical staff.

"Repromed employs each of its doctors and this has created a special model of care.

"Our general practitioners and infertility specialists share their knowledge and skills, including discussion about individual cases. This contributes to Repromed's clearly defined protocols to ensure consistency and quality of care."

Welcoming new doctors

To meet growth in demand for assisted conception, Repromed has appointed new specialists in Adelaide and in its clinical services in Port Augusta, Whyalla and Port Lincoln.

Repromed's medical staff includes experienced reproductive medicine specialist, general practitioners with a special interest in infertility issues, and highly trained nurses.

"Our medical staff work closely together to ensure the treatment pathway is as seamless as possible with support from outstanding scientific and technical services," said Repromed Medical Director, Dr Richard Henshaw.

"The additional medical staff will help us to create families for the many couples who despair about their inability to conceive."

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Triumph over adversity for Dale and Erika

Couples entering IVF are made aware that it can be a physically and emotionally exhausting journey often ending in joy, but sometimes failure.

For Dale and Erika Elliott there was an extra dimension to the IVF challenge of achieving their dream of parenthood. In 2002, at the age of 26, Dale had a motorbike accident that shattered his spine, leaving him a paraplegic without any sense of feeling below his navel.

Prior to the accident, Dale was a big achiever in the aviation field as a commercial pilot. His life was literally on a high, and he and Erika had decided the time was right to start a family.

However, the accident turned their plans upside down. Dale had to confront the reality that he would never walk again, or do many of the things he previously enjoyed. Erika was with her young husband at the time of the crash, and it left her with post-traumatic stress leading to a dramatic loss in weight.

"The accident had a massive impact on us both," Dale recalled. "For a long time we couldn't even talk about it."

Yet the couple bravely embraced a sense of hope that slowly transformed into optimism about the future. We knew that we had to get things into perspective again, to rebuild our lives and our hopes," Dale said. "We simply had to make happy times again by knocking down barriers.

"Erika wanted to be a mum, but I had no idea about what role I could play."

While they were aware of IVF, Dale and Erika had no knowledge of the technology, nor any understanding of how it may help them have a baby.

"We were referred to Repromed, and our specialist, Dr Trevor Mudge, said he could help us," Erika said.

"It required IVF to fertilise my eggs with sperm extracted from Dale by needle.

"And so our IVF journey began through two unsuccessful cycles. I lost confidence after the second cycle, but Dale and I decided to give it one more go.

"In the third cycle, I had only one viable egg. We both spent time with Anne Graham, one of Repromed's specialist counsellors, and her support was wonderful.

"In the end, I decided to relax, to take all the stress out of my body and give it the best possible chance of success in the IVF cycle."

On May 20 last year, their son Jayden was born.

Apart from the unbound joy Jayden brought into their lives, his birth was a triumph of Dale and Erika's commitment to never give up on their dream.

Dale now works as a comedian bringing laughter into the lives of others, but also weaving inspiration into his punch lines.

"If there is something you really want, the important thing is never to give up trying to achieve it," he said. "You can overcome adversity in life. Our dream was a baby, and Repromed helped us to make it happen. It was a team effort,



Dale and Erika Elliott with baby Jayden at Brighton beach

and the support we received was fantastic."

Dale plans to use the IVF experience, and his special communication skills, to talk to people considering assisted reproduction with Repromed.

"I would just like to encourage people to keep trying, to understand the emotional challenges that comes with IVF, and the value of sharing your thoughts and hopes with others," he said.

Comfort in sharing your experiences

Infertility has a direct impact on couples striving for parenthood. It also extends to wider family members and friends who make up the supportive community into which children are born.

Talking with others and sharing experiences can be a wonderful support mechanism for people experiencing infertility and those seeking assisted conception. It also helps others going through similar experiences to make more informed choices, and understand that they are not alone in their circumstances.

The Repromed website www.repromed.com.au features a community section that is an interactive forum for individuals and couples experiencing infertility, along with family members and friends, to communicate. If you are willing to participate in the forum, Repromed welcomes your comments, stories and experiences in the spirit of sharing and caring. Just log on to the website.



Bruno Radesic



Stephen Lane



Simona Fischer



Lisa Bedson



Chris Barry

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Repromed welcomes the following doctors:

Dr Bruno Radesic MD FRANZCOG

Dr Bruno Radesic is a Fellow of the Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists. He has been working in public and private practice for the past two years. Dr Radesic's main clinical interests are female and male infertility, early pregnancy complications and general gynaecology.

Dr Stephen Lane MBBS FRANZCOG

Dr Stephen Lane qualified from Adelaide University in 1990. He has been a Fellow of the Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists since 2001. Dr Lane's special interest is reproductive medicine, and he

studied in the United Kingdom before continuing his practice at Flinders Reproductive Medicine for nine years.

Dr Simona Fischer BHB MBChB MRANZCOG

Dr Simona Fischer graduated from the Auckland School of Medicine in 2000. She became a Member of the Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists in 2008. Dr Fischer worked as an Infertility Registrar in Auckland, and later at Flinders Medical Centre as Gynaecological Oncology and High Risk Obstetrics Senior Registrar.

Dr Lisa Bedson MBBS FRACGP DipRANZCOG MRepM

Dr Lisa Bedson is a graduate of the University of Adelaide. She is a Fellow of the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners

and holds a Diploma from the Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists.

Dr Bedson has completed a Fellowship in Reproductive Health Care at the University of Toronto and the Toronto-based Create Fertility Centre. She has a Masters degree in Reproductive Medicine from the University of New South Wales.

Dr Chris Barry MBBS FRCOG FRANZCOG

Dr Christopher Barry is a specialist Obstetrician and Gynaecologist who trained in the United Kingdom. He has worked in Australia for over ten years. Dr Barry holds an honorary title as Visiting Lecturer at the University of Adelaide and is currently completing a PhD into the use of three-dimensional ultrasound.

Consulting in Port Augusta, Whyalla and Port Lincoln

Repromed provides consulting services on a monthly basis at the Port Augusta, Whyalla and Port Lincoln hospitals.

Associate Professor Ossie Petrucco has recently departed Repromed. Dr Kelton Tremellen and Dr Bruno Radesic will replace him as consulting specialists in the Iron Triangle and Port Lincoln.

Dr Tremellon is the Deputy Medical Director of Repromed and a specialist in reproductive endocrinology and infertility. His clinical interest includes male infertility and recurrent miscarriage. He will consult in Port Augusta and Whyalla.

Dr Radesic is one of Repromed's new specialists in male and female infertility, early pregnancy and general gynaecology. He will consult in Port Lincoln.

To arrange appointments, please call Repromed on (08) 8333 8111.

Darwin update

Repromed's unit at the Darwin Private Hospital is meeting a growing need for assisted reproduction services in the Northern Territory. Dr Christine Kirby has taken over specialist fertility treatment in Darwin. She succeeds Dr Trevor Mudge, who has retired.



Kelton Tremellen

Seminars on preparing for pregnancy

Repromed is pioneering a series of free seminars on preparing for pregnancy. The free seminars will cover a range of topics from fertility and diet to natural therapies, yoga and finding a life balance.

Repromed Medical Director, Dr Richard Henshaw, said the seminars, held in conjunction with the Australian Centre for Natural Health and Wellness, provided a blend of natural therapies and medical technology.

"Increasingly, we are finding that people are seeking alternative health treatments," Dr Henshaw explained. "We understand that modern medicine has to embrace these alternatives and combine these philosophies and practices with the science of IVF."

Dr Henshaw said the seminar program started with a presentation on optimising opportunities to achieve pregnancy before considering IVF.

"We will be covering issues such as naturopathic fertility protocols, the role of acupuncture, massage and natural therapies to counter stress management and aid in pregnancy," he added.

"While our staff will run some of the sessions there will also be presentations by an exercise physiologist, a naturopath, a dietitian and a life coach talking about balancing life and career and the desire to have a child."

The free evening seminars are held at Repromed, 180 Fullarton Road, Dulwich over five weeks. For more information, call 8333 8111 or go to the website www.repromed.com.au

Embracing a natural approach to fertility

The Australian Centre for Natural Health and Wellness specialises in women's health, fertility and IVF support.

The Norwood Centre provides services in naturopathy, herbal medicine, acupuncture, psychology and counselling, hypnotherapy, massage, exercise physiology, yoga and meditation in a professional and nurturing environment.

Director and Practicing Naturopath, Karen Martin, said there was a natural synergy between Repromed's commitment to promoting fertility fitness and the centre's own approach to holistic health.

"Our approach is to look at the person from a total wellness perspective," Karen said. "It includes diet, exercise and lifestyle choices that can impact on general health."

"We are also committed to evidence-based treatment in that we make sure that it is actually

working for our clients. It is about embracing proven science and alternative treatments that have gained widespread acceptance in the medical profession."

Karen said there was increasing evidence that people who had compromised their health often relied on technology to overcome the challenges confronting them.

"We try to reconnect people with their bodies to achieve natural improvement in health, which in turn leads to improved fertility and pregnancy outcomes."

"Often this can include stress management recognising the interaction between body and mind."

"There is no magic bullet. Treatment may include a combination of many factors that may include diet, exercise, yoga, meditation, massage to relieve muscle tension and counselling."

Tips for men

Undergoing fertility treatment is often likened to travelling along an emotional roller coaster - plenty of ups and downs, and hope that at times is followed by immense disappointment.

This journey can be quite different for males and females. When faced with the challenges of fertility treatment, women often want to talk about their experiences, and they will seek out the support of others who will listen.

Often men facing a challenge or a problem seek to find a solution that may bring them into differences of opinion with their partner.

Following is a list of some strategies men can use to manage their role in the infertility treatment journey:

- recognise your own thoughts, feelings, fears and hopes, and share them with your partner;
- have a small network of friends and family members who you trust to support you and your partner during the process;
- if possible, talk with other men or couples who have undergone treatment;
- ask questions of medical staff involved in your treatment;
- read books or go to trusted websites to help educate yourself about treatment and what to expect. Medical and counselling staff at Repromed can suggest books and websites that may be of assistance;
- self-care is an important way of managing stress through activities such as exercise, yoga, relaxation, or just taking the dog for a walk;
- remember to nurture your relationship by planning to do activities that you both enjoy doing together;

Ask your partner what you can do to support her, and try to be involved in treatment by attending appointments with her, or giving her needles if required.

The counselling staff at Repromed are available to talk with you individually or with your partner. To arrange an appointment, please contact reception on 8333 8111.

Katrina Burgess, Counselling Services Coordinator, Repromed

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Your dream is our goal

www.repromed.com.au

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