

Latest methods, treatments for infertility available in Iran

Iran hosts many foreign patients seeking sterility treatment



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INTERVIEW

Iran is recognized as a leading country in the field of infertility treatments globally, holding a significant position in this medical domain. According to a board member of the Iranian Society of Reproductive Medicine and a professor at Shahid Beheshti University of Medical Sciences, the latest advanced methods and treatments for infertility are indeed accessible in Iran.

Saghar Salehpour states, "Due to our high level of scientific and medical expertise in infertility treatments and the considerably lower costs of health-care services in Iran compared to developed countries, a large number of foreign patients travel to Iran each year for infertility treatment. They return to their home countries after achieving satisfactory and favorable results."

Iran Daily conducted an exclusive interview with Saghar Salehpour regarding the state of medical knowledge in Iran concerning infertility treatments. The full text of the interview follows:

IRAN DAILY: Could you briefly explain the history and current level of infertility treatments in Iran?

SALEHPOUR: Infertility treatment in Iran began with the establishment of the Yazd Research and Clinical Center for Infertility in 1989. For about 35 years now, these treatments have been conducted at a very high standard in Iran. All infertility treatments, including IVF, microinjection, male infertility treatments, endoscopic procedures, laparoscopy, hysteroscopy, and genetic-related treatments such as embryo biopsy and various genetic screenings, are available in our country.

Currently, there are over 120 infertility centers in Iran, with approximately 30% of these centers affiliated with universities and government institutions. Our

infertility specialists, whose primary specialty is obstetrics and gynecology, collaborate effectively with embryologists, urologists, and geneticists to manage the activities of these centers successfully, leading to high patient satisfaction with the outcomes. The success rates for patients are excellent in both public and private centers, and indeed, our centers are on par with advanced global centers in the field of infertility treatment. Furthermore, the costs associated with infertility treatments in Iran remain significantly lower than those in many medical facilities worldwide. As a result, in addition to Iranian expatriates who seek medical services in Iran every year, we observe a notable influx of patients from various regions, particularly from the Middle East and the Persian Gulf countries. Each year, a substantial number of infertile couples from our northern, eastern, western, and southern neighboring countries come to Iran for these services.

How does Iran rank in terms of infertility treatment in the region?

Rankings regarding the status of countries are typically announced by organizations such as the World Health Organization. However, to describe Iran's situation in the region, it suffices to note that a significant number of our patients currently come from the Middle East. This trend is not solely due to the low treatment costs in our country; even if free medical services were offered, if they did not yield results, no one would be willing to invest their time and travel expenses for such services. At present, the success rate of infertility treatments in Iran matches that of advanced centers worldwide.

What is the current state of infertility in Iran? How many couples face this issue, and how many of these cases are treatable?

Statistics regarding the prevalence of infertility among couples in Iran vary, but it can generally be stated that approximately 12 to 15 percent of Iranian couples experience infertility issues. In other words, for every six couples that marry, typically one couple is infertile.



As is common worldwide, about 35 to 40 percent of infertility problems are attributed to male factors, while 50 to 55 percent are due to female factors. Additionally, around 10 to 15 percent of cases involve couples with no significant issues but who still face challenges conceiving. The success rate of treatments in each cycle is approximately 45 to 50 percent, and with repeated treatment cycles, it can be said that nearly all infertility issues are treatable. In certain cases, we may need to seek assistance from a third party, such as when a woman has no eggs. Additionally, some patients may resort to egg donation, embryo donation, or surrogate motherhood as part of their treatment process. Thus, almost all couples can remain hopeful that they will achieve results through one of these methods.

Can you discuss the latest infertility treatment methods available both

globally and within our country?

Since about 35 years ago, in vitro fertilization (IVF) has been performed in Iran. The microinjection method has been utilized for around 30 years worldwide and is also employed in Iran. We have been freezing embryos using various methods for approximately 30 years. Plus, genetic testing methods have been introduced in the field of reproductive health in Iran for over a decade. We can assess the genetic health of embryos and identify specific genes that may lead to diseases within families, such as thalassemia, hemophilia, and Duchenne muscular dystrophy.

In cases where individuals have children with specific diseases requiring stem cells similar to their own, or where children need bone marrow transplants but suitable cells are not available, we utilize HLA typing. When a mother becomes pregnant, we can identify the HLA type that matches the sick child in



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the embryo we implant. This enables the newborn to potentially assist an older sibling in terms of bone marrow or stem cells. These represent some of the cutting-edge methods being implemented in Iran today.

Tehran, Moscow usher in ...

Over three decades, Iran and Russia have expanded their cooperation in all areas, and given the current circumstances and the level of their relations, it was essential to update the previous document.

Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi has previously said that the 20-year contract is not merely a political document but a roadmap for the future. According to the minister, the agreement encompasses all aspects of cooperation, with a particular focus on three main areas: economic, scientific and technological, and cultural and tourism cooperation. Araghchi elaborated on the matter, stating that the comprehensive agreement places special emphasis on enhancing economic relations between the two nations.

North-South Corridor: the major transportation project connects Iran to Russia and subsequently to Europe and Asia.

Trade and Investment: Last year, trade between Iran and Russia grew by 15%, and the new agreement is expected to accelerate this trend even further. The agenda for this cooperation includes developing joint markets and investing in infrastructure projects.

The second focus is on technology and science. The comprehensive partnership agreement provides a framework for knowledge sharing and collaboration in areas such as nanotechnology, aerospace, artificial intelligence, and medical sciences. This cooperation will extend not only at the government level but also between universities and research institutions in both countries.

The third area is culture and

tourism, aimed at strengthening humanitarian relations. This strategic agreement will facilitate tourist exchanges and establish joint cultural programs.

According to Araghchi, Iran and Russia are redefining a new model of regional and global cooperation through their active participation in organizations such as the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, BRICS, and the Eurasian Economic Union. These organizations represent emerging powers and challengers to the unipolar order, creating a platform for enhanced synergy and coordination between Iran and Russia.

Also, Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov has emphasized that the agreement is not directed against any other country but aims to ensure the security of both nations. Lavrov noted that the accord is intended to accel-

erate economic exchanges, address social issues in bilateral relations, and ensure reliable defense capabilities.

This deal, which, according to Iranian Ambassador to Russia Kazem Jalali, comprises an introduction and 47 articles, encompasses all areas of bilateral relations. Its drafting has taken into account balance, independence, and respect for territorial integrity. Given that Iran and Russia possess energy resources, cooperation between the two countries in the fields of international trade and energy has also been anticipated. The Iranian diplomat stated that cooperation in new technologies, information security, and cybersecurity, is also included in the comprehensive joint agreement. Furthermore, collaboration in peaceful nuclear energy, defense

and military matters, combating terrorism, environmental issues, the Caspian Sea, and tackling money laundering and organized crime constitutes additional provisions of this agreement.

The Kremlin spokesperson, Dmitry Peskov, stated that the comprehensive joint agreement meets the aspirations of the peoples of these two friendly neighboring countries and elevates their relations to a strategic partnership level. Following the signing of the treaty by the two presidents, it must be ratified by the legislative bodies of both countries. As announced by the Iranian ambassador to Moscow, the document is not confidential. When the government presents it to the Iranian Parliament as a bill, its text will no longer be concealed from anyone. Leonid Slutsky, chairman of the international affairs committee

of the State Duma of Russia, has described this document as a roadmap for developing bilateral relations, saying that the two countries will focus on enhancing economic cooperation, including in transportation, energy, and technology.

He noted that this treaty represents an important step both in the context of bilateral relations and in the regional and international agenda, particularly concerning security issues and balanced cooperation. Both Russia and Iran oppose US hegemony, the unipolar world, the collective West's attempts to dictate policies to others, illegal sanctions, and interference in the internal affairs of other countries. The collaboration between Russia and Iran is deeply rooted and can be seen as a genuine example of a partnership based on mutual respect.