

Anxiety and depression do not affect pregnancy and treatment cancellation rates

29 January 2009

Anxiety and depression before and during fertility treatment does not affect the likelihood of a woman becoming pregnant or of her cancelling her treatment, according to a study published in Europe's leading reproductive medicine journal, *Human Reproduction* on Thursday 29 January.

Dr Bea Lintsen, a physician at the Department of Obstetrics and Gynaecology, Radboud University Nijmegen Medical Centre (The Netherlands), and her colleagues used questionnaires to assess the levels of psychological distress in 783 women at two points before and during fertility treatment. Results from the 421 women who completed both questionnaires showed that levels of depression or anxiety either before or during fertility treatment had no influence over cancellation rates and did not predict pregnancy rates either.

Until now, studies of the links between anxiety and depression and the success of fertility treatment have been inconclusive. Dr Lintsen believes hers is the largest prospective study yet to look at the influence of distress on the outcome of a first IVF or ICSI treatment, and that the findings are reliable. However, she and her colleagues say the associations between psychological factors and pregnancy rates after IVF are complex and require further research into mediating factors such as lifestyle and sexual behaviour.

Reference: Anxiety and depression have no influence on the cancellation and pregnancy rates of a first IVF or ICSI treatment. *Human Reproduction*. Published online under advance access. doi:10.1093/humrep/den491.

Source: Oxford University

APA citation: Anxiety and depression do not affect pregnancy and treatment cancellation rates (2009, January 29) retrieved 4 July 2022 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2009-01-anxiety-depression-affect-pregnancy-treatment.html>

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