Reproductive Medicine: The Comeback

As Europe begins to restart Assisted Reproductive Technologies (ART), we look at a roadmap for the safe return of IVF and other fertility treatments in the United States.

1 Flatten the Curve

Social distancing, the use of masks, and frequent hand washing have increased the odds that people with the virus can receive the care they need, including IVF and related medical services. The American Society for Reproductive Medicine (ASRM) recommends that practices not reopen until there has been a local COVID decrease for at least 14 days.

2 Get Educated

All medical professionals have extensive training in health and cleanliness protocols, but COVID has made it more important than ever to keep facilities as safe as possible. Before reopening, all practices need to ensure that they are up-to-date on the latest information about virus transmission and are taking active steps to prevent it.

3 Be Safe

Despite the flattening curve, we all still need to take precautions. ART facilities need to use the most stringent safety measures to ensure the health of doctors, nurses and other clinic employees, as well as patients. ASRM has issued guidelines for specific procedures, some of which require medical-grade masks, full face shields, and gowns.

4 Lower Risk

Unfortunately, high-risk patients may not be able to get the care they want right away. ESHRE recommends that people with diabetes, hypertension, using immunosuppressant therapy, past transplant patients, lung, liver or renal disease should not start ART treatment until it is deemed safe to do so by relevant healthcare professionals and/or local health authorities.

5 Roll Out Slowly

Not every ART practice is going to be ready to resume a full slate of services on day one. That's actually a good thing, because it will give them time to ensure that all staff members are trained in risk management and that every procedure is being performed as safely as possible. Practices may also want to limit the number of patients they see.

Founded by physicians in 1997, ARC Fertility is the established leader in providing fertility resources and services to patients. For more information, visit www.arcfertility.com.

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