Forming Families

November 2022

Dr. Ellen Goldstein on balancing fertility & career

Fertility Benefits: The Smart Move for Tech

Are egg freezing parties right for you?

Meet three amazing ARC partners



Women in High Tech

www.arcfertility.com

arc FERTILITY

Intro

Welcome to the final 2022 issue of **Forming Families**, the quarterly newsletter where ARC Fertility shines a light on important issues related to healthcare, fertility, and growing families.

Fertility issues can affect anyone, but women who work in the high-tech industry face unique challenges that often create a "perfect storm" that can make it difficult for them to balance their careers and grow their families while sometimes facing subtle and overt sexism in the workplace.

Because of the speed of innovation, taking even a few years off from work – especially early in one's career – can have serious professional consequences for programmers and engineers. That's why so many women in tech wait to have children until they are in their late 30s or early 40s, which is when many fertility issues develop. A growing number of women in the industry are choosing to freeze their eggs so that they have a better chance of having children later in life, and many women who wait to try to have children end up needing reproductive medical services such as IVF or donor eggs.

All of these measures can be expensive, and most corporate benefits programs don't cover the full cost. Companies that provide fertility benefits are more likely to hire and retain the best female employees, which is why an increasing number of technology industry leaders are adding fertility to their packages,

Top candidates are looking for workplaces that respect both their professional qualifications and their need for a fulfilling private life. The days of women in tech losing their career momentum for having a baby need to end, and companies should give their employees the best tools to access the fertility treatments they need.

Thank you for being part of the ARC Fertility family and for supporting our mission.



David Adamson, MD
Founder and CEO
ARC Fertility

An Interview with Dr. Ellen Goldstein



INTRO

Women in demanding careers like technology often feel forced to choose between career and family. Dr. Ellen Goldstein of Beverly Hills Fertility knows this choice is more complicated than prioritizing one and then the other. Dr. Goldstein attended the Mount Sinai School of Medicine in New York City and has published and internationally presented her discovery of the genetic mutation behind a previously unexplained cause of familial infertility.

What are some trends you've noticed when treating women in tech?

These women are planners in a high-powered field, already thinking about how to balance career and family goals. I see a trend toward thinking about trying to preserve fertility at earlier ages. Tech companies are forward-thinking in terms of offering benefits, as it helps to recruit and retain top talent.

How have tech workplaces risen to the challenge of offering fertility coverage?

I've seen many companies offering third party benefits. The major insurance plans are poor at offering fertility treatment but third-party benefits companies like ARC really understand how fertility care works. Where insurance companies decline, decline, decline, third parties help patients make the best decisions to improve outcomes.

Ultimately, some coverage is better than none, but I'd be surprised if any business attracts and retains top talent without fertility benefits.

Have you observed "egg freezing parties" among career-focused women?

I was involved with one special party where a motivated patient wanted to educate her friends. The event had amazing speakers. We had a medical assistant on hand to test for egg count, and offered private consultations, all for free. Over half the attendees came in for their consultation.

Egg freezing parties are an exciting but not necessarily efficient way to spread awareness. Fertility is ultimately such a private thing, and it took so much effort to convince people to come.

What advice would you give women looking to build their family without undermining their career?

You can't strongarm biology. Women need to come to terms with the fact they're going to have to balance family and career building and may have to do both at once.

Human reproduction is inefficient, delicate, and unpredictable, even in your prime. Fertility preservation is not a guarantee.

So have a conversation that considers your own biology and availability. Include your doctor, family, partner, and even therapist. Figure out how to juggle these two very important goals. Egg freezing is a great option, but there's no guarantee of success until you bring a healthy baby home from the hospital.

At a Glance



What Does the End of Roe v. Wade Mean For Fertility Medicine?

The recent overturning of federal protections for reproductive rights has created uncertainty as Americans figure out what lies ahead. One of the biggest unknowns is access to medical treatments for fertility issues, which will now be decided state-by-state with varying levels of restrictions. Reproductive endocrinologist Dr. David Adamson, CEO of ARC Fertility, breaks down what effect the decision is likely to have on different kinds of medical services that people use to form their families.

A full national ban on fertility medicine is extremely unlikely, although certain state governments are expected to pass sweeping restrictions on reproductive rights that may encroach on access to reproductive medical services. One of the issues of greatest concern regards embryos and especially the freezing of embryos during IVF cycles. Fertility treatments create several embryos to increase the chance of a successful birth. As state laws change, there may be restrictions on treatment options because discarding an embryo, even if it does not have the potential to result in a baby, may be seen as tantamount to terminating a pregnancy.

This is an especially challenging medical situation for patients and doctors because not all embryos are normal and many that are created have very little or no chance of resulting in a pregnancy or a healthy baby. This is just the same as occurs in reproduction inside a woman's body when many embryos that are created do not implant in the uterus to start a pregnancy or result in miscarriage, ectopic pregnancy or other outcome in which a baby is not born.

There may also be restrictions on people traveling to other states to access medical care and on fertility care physicians and providers who inform or assist patients with out-of-state options. While definite conclusions are not at all yet possible, some clinical scenarios that impact patient care seem more likely:

IVF. A ban is unlikely.

ICSI. Not likely to be affected because sperm injection is dealing with sperm and egg, not an embryo.

Egg Freezing. Not likely to be affected, although there may be attempts to restrict it in some states.

Freezing of embryos. Likely to remain possible in all states.

Thawing of embryos. This is still possible, although all the embryos thawed might have to be transferred to the uterus or frozen again, regardless of their ability to make a baby. Embryos that are frozen and thawed twice have a lower chance of resulting in a pregnancy. There may well be restrictions on discarding embryos, even if they are of poor quality not able or very unlikely to result in a baby.

Preimplantation Genetic Testing for Aneuploidy (PGT-A). May be banned in some states because embryos have to be frozen for the testing and then abnormal embryos are discarded later.

Preimplantation Genetic Testing (PGT). Could be prohibited on the basis that biopsy of the embryo is "battery" on the embryo as a person and therefore not allowed.

It is very possible that single women and men, and gay or lesbian couples, may face restrictions in some states and may have to go out of state to get care. Once clinics see the effect of regulations, they may respond by closing some locations and opening others where they can provide needed services. We can expect that patients, consumer organizations, legal organizations and medical professionals who believe in reproductive rights, social justice, gender equity and access to care will work together to identify ways to provide care that is needed by many while following new regulations. It is important to remember that this will play out over the course of years or even decades because there are expected to be numerous lawsuits regarding the constitutionality of various state laws that are expected to be enacted relating to reproductive rights.



Fertility Benefits: The Smart Move for Tech

Women are some of the highest achievers in technology, and yet face an uphill battle to succeed in a male-dominated industry. Companies that offer fertility benefits and stigma-free maternity leave are more likely to hire and retain the most dynamic, diverse workforce.

The creative and enterprising women working in technology have been some of our most exciting business leaders, innovators, and entrepreneurs. Women like YouTube CEO Susan Wojcicki and Microsoft Chief Digital Officer Jacky Wright are just two examples of how women are reshaping technology, the business landscape, and opportunity for their fellow women.

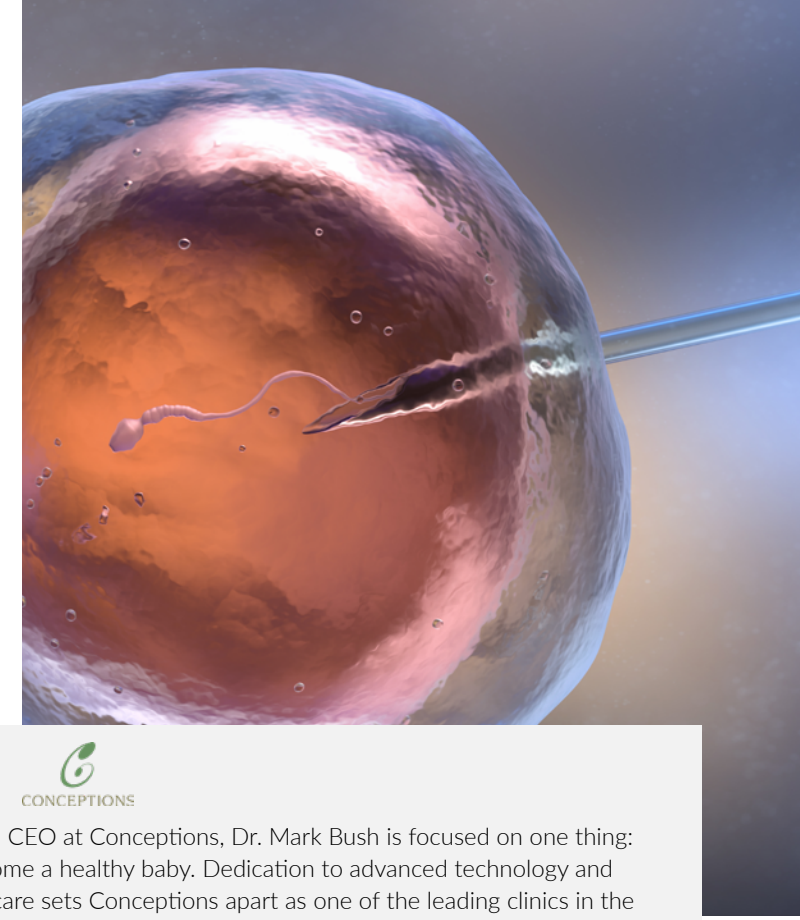
The successes women have achieved in technology are especially impressive given the challenges inherent to rising through the ranks of tech companies. Motivated women often have to work twice as hard ("backwards in heels") as their male coworkers to get noticed and reach a position where they can forge company policy and the career they want.

These challenges have knock-on effects on female employees' private lives, especially their ability to have children early in their lives. In any fast-moving, competitive field, taking time out of one's career can be a dangerous step back, especially the time for a reasonable maternity leave. Technology, especially, changes so fast a woman can take time off to have a baby and come back to find her entire business upended.

For these reasons and more, women in tech are waiting longer to have children, preferring to be fully secure in their careers and positions before taking that much time off. Thankfully, medical technology allows women to harvest and freeze their eggs for when they are ready to grow their families. Women in tech are even hosting "egg freezing parties" to show support and solidarity.

The tech industry is famous for top-flight benefits, which in today's workplace should absolutely include access to fertility care like egg-freezing, in-vitro fertilization, and more. For employees, this can mean the difference between having the family they want and forgoing a happy personal life. For employers, providing comprehensive fertility care will help achieve diversity goals. Companies that treat their employees with respect and consideration will hire and retain more women and attract their partners as well.

Three Great Providers for Women in Tech



Now it's time to point out three of the amazing infertility practices that work with women in technology looking to start their families. All of our partners deserve recognition for their excellent work, and employers and patients alike should seek out these teams when providing or undergoing fertility treatment.



Dr. Mark Bush

CONCEPTIONS

As Medical Director and CEO at Conceptions, Dr. Mark Bush is focused on one thing: helping parents bring home a healthy baby. Dedication to advanced technology and compassionate patient care sets Conceptions apart as one of the leading clinics in the country.

"As the leading fertility center in Colorado partnering with ARC, Conceptions is expanding access to fertility treatment to more people who are hoping to become parents. ARC and Conceptions share a primary goal, helping people achieve their dream of building a family by providing exceptional success rates and affordable pricing options."



Dr. Stephanie Gunderson

Froedtert & Medical College of Wisconsin

Froedtert and the Medical College of Wisconsin is the largest fertility clinic in the state of Wisconsin. Dr Gunderson has been a champion for fertility preservation, increasing accessibility and financial support for individuals seeking these services.

"ARC fertility allows more of my patients the opportunity to pursue fertility treatments by making treatments more economical and therefore more accessible."



Dr. Richard V. Grazi

GENESIS

Richard V. Grazi, M.D. is the founder of GENESIS and Director of the Division of Reproductive Endocrinology at Maimonides Medical Center. He has consistently been named by New York Magazine as one of the Best Doctors in the New York Metropolitan Area and by the Castle Connolly Medical Guide as one of America's Top Doctors.

"As the founder of GENESIS, I'm pleased to partner with ARC to provide our patients with affordable treatment packages and financing programs. This gives our patients financial peace of mind, allowing us to concentrate on treatment."

FERTILITY BENEFITS

A Key to DEI

Offering your employees a way to grow their families is a great way to let the world know that your company is committed to the physical and emotional wellbeing of their teams. It is also a proven approach to attracting and retaining women, members of the LGBTQ+ community, and others who need assistance to bring children into their lives.





Employers are facing an increasingly competitive labor market. The unemployment rate is at 3.6%, which the Federal Reserve classifies as full employment. First-time jobless claims are at their lowest levels since 1970, while wages have steadily climbed over the past year. Companies are working harder to attract and retain quality employees, and higher pay is just one arrow in their quiver.

To entice and keep top-tier talent, many organizations have started offering, outside of traditional compensation plans, benefits which explicitly help employees start or expand their families.

Family-building benefits create significant goodwill between employers and employees because they show that a company is sensitive to its workforce's needs outside the workplace. Studies have shown that employees who use these benefits have increased loyalty to their employer, and even employees who never plan to use this coverage view them positively. These benefits typically cover treatments like in vitro fertilization (IVF), intrauterine insemination (IUI), adoption support services, fertility drug prescriptions, and surrogacy.

- Build employee loyalty
- Reduce staff turnover
- Become an employer of choice for job seekers
- Increase diversity

For more information about ARC Fertility's Family Forming Benefits, please contact ARC direcly at **888-990-2727** or **info@arcfertility**

For more information about ARC Fertility's Family Forming Benefits, please contact ARC direcly at **888-990-2727** or **info@arcfertility**