

It is not clear whether fibroids decrease the likelihood of pregnancy; submucosal fibroids and intramural fibroids that distort the endometrial cavity may lower pregnancy rates and increase the risk of pregnancy loss. Removal of submucosal fibroids, uterine polyps, and adhesions hysteroscopically may improve subsequent pregnancy rates.

Endometriosis Endometriosis is a common gynecologic condition associated with pelvic pain and dysmenorrhea, and in severe cases, it is associated with tubo-ovarian infertility. Approximately 25–50% of infertile women have endometriosis, and 30–50% of women with endometriosis have infertility. Prolonged medical management to suppress endometriotic lesions and surgical treatment of stage 1 and 2 endometriosis have not been shown to improve subsequent fertility rates. Surgical removal of endometriotic lesions in women with stage 3 or 4 endometriosis may improve subsequent pregnancy rates. First-line treatment of infertility associated with endometriosis alone includes use of oral ovulation induction medications and IUI.

■ PSYCHOLOGICAL ASPECTS OF INFERTILITY

It is well recognized that infertility is associated with psychological stress related not only to the diagnostic and therapeutic procedures themselves but also to repeated cycles of hope and loss associated with each new procedure or cycle of treatment that does not result in the birth of a child. These feelings are often combined with a sense of isolation from friends and family. Counseling and stress-management techniques should be offered early in the evaluation of infertility. Importantly, infertility and its treatment do not appear to be associated with long-term psychological sequelae.

CONTRACEPTION

The desired ideal number of children per family varies around the globe and is approximately 2.6 in the United States. Couples not using any form of contraception have an 85% chance of achieving a pregnancy over 1 year. Based on these data, couples spend most of their reproductive life preventing a pregnancy and a much smaller