



Texas Women's Healthcare Coalition

PROMOTING ACCESS TO PREVENTIVE
HEALTHCARE FOR ALL TEXAS WOMEN

May 31st, 2024

TWHC Statement Supporting In-Vitro Fertilization (IVF) in Texas Adopted by the Texas Women's Healthcare Coalition

Who We Are

The Texas Women's Healthcare Coalition (TWHC) is a group of 77 healthcare, faith, and community-based member organizations dedicated to improving the health and well-being of Texas women, babies, and families by ensuring access to preventive healthcare for all Texas women. Access to preventive and preconception care – including health screenings and contraception – means healthy, planned pregnancies and the early detection of cancers and other treatable conditions.

TWHC Position on In-Vitro Fertilization

IVF is a safe, common, and essential infertility treatment, empowering parents to have children when they otherwise might not be able to and preserving fertility for women who might otherwise lose it. While the challenges of infertility can be devastating for Texans seeking to have children, IVF offers hope.

In the aftermath of the February 2024 Alabama Supreme Court's IVF ruling, which disrupted IVF treatment for Alabamian families, Texas leaders have made strong statements in support of this essential service. Texas Governor Greg Abbott noted, "We [Texas] as a state want to ensure that we promote life, we bring more life into the world and we empower parents to be able to have more children...I think the goal is to make sure that we can find a pathway to ensure that parents who otherwise may not have the opportunity to have a child will be able to have access to the IVF process and become parents and give life to babies."¹

We at TWHC wholeheartedly agree with this position.

IVF Treatment Explained

In-vitro fertilization (IVF) is form of assisted reproduction technology that helps individuals or couples get pregnant. An IVF procedure involves several steps, known as an "IVF cycle." First, a woman takes fertility drugs to stimulate egg production in her ovaries. The eggs are then retrieved and fertilized in a laboratory with sperm. One or more fertilized eggs, or embryos, are then

¹ Klibanoff, Eleanor. Gov. Greg Abbott Signals Support for IVF in Texas after Alabama Ruling, The Texas Tribune, 26 Feb. 2024, www.texastribune.org/2024/02/26/texas-greg-abbott-ivf/.



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transferred to a woman's uterus. If the procedure is successful, the embryo will develop and grow over the next nine months until a baby is born.²

The procedure is used to help people with various forms of infertility have children, including those with damaged fallopian tubes that prevent sperm from reaching the egg or the fertilized egg from reaching the uterus, those with endometriosis - a condition in which endometrium-like tissue is found outside the uterus, those with male factor infertility due to decreased sperm count, motility, or abnormal sperm shape, and more. IVF may also be used in other situations when fertility is not an issue, including families who plan to use donor eggs to get pregnant, women undergoing treatment for significant illnesses who wish to preserve their eggs, or families who intend to use a gestational surrogate to carry and deliver their baby.³

Infertility is an extremely common medical diagnosis and obstacle for women and their families. Roughly 1 in 5 married women between the ages of 15 and 49 are unable to get pregnant after one year of trying to conceive. Moreover, 33% of American adults report that they or someone they know has used some type of fertility treatment to conceive. ⁴ Today, IVF accounts for 2% of Texas' annual births, resulting in nearly 7,800 babies in 2021.^{5 6}

Americans strongly support IVF treatments. According to a survey conducted by the Pew Research Center in April of this year, 70% of American adults believe that having access to IVF is a good thing. Only 8% claim to believe access to IVF is bad or harmful, and 22% of Americans claim to be unsure on the issue.⁷

There is a clear, deep desire for accessible IVF treatment nationwide, especially in Texas.

Conclusion

While Texas is not Alabama, there are nevertheless concerns among TWHC members about potential IVF restrictions here at home, especially following the recent petition to the Texas

² In Vitro Fertilization (IVF), Yale Medicine, www.yalemedicine.org/conditions/ivf.

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⁴ Livingston, Gretchen. A Third of U.S. Adults Say They Have Used Fertility Treatments or Know Someone Who Has. Pew Research Center, 31 July 2020, <https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2018/07/17/a-third-of-u-s-adults-say-they-have-used-fertility-treatments-or-know-someone-who-has/>.

⁵ Javid, Maham, and Dan Rosenzweig-Ziff. What to Know about the Alabama Embryo Ruling and Its IVF Implications, The Washington Post, 21 Feb. 2024, www.washingtonpost.com/nation/2024/02/20/ivf-treatment-alabama-embryo-ruling/.

⁶ [2021 State-Specific Assisted Reproductive Technology Surveillance | CDC](#)

⁷ Borelli, Gabriel. Americans Overwhelmingly Say Access to IVF Is a Good Thing, Pew Research Center, 13 May 2024, www.pewresearch.org/short-reads/2024/05/13/americans-overwhelmingly-say-access-to-ivf-is-a-good-thing/.



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Supreme Court asking it to consider a case with far-reaching IVF implications.⁸ As such, TWHC believes it is important for it to publicly convey its support for continued IVF availability.

If any TWHC members or supporters have questions, please contact our staff.

Respectfully,

Evelyn Delgado
Chair, Texas Women's Healthcare Coalition

⁸ Klibanoff, Eleanor. How a Denton Divorce Could Imperil IVF Access in Texas, The Texas Tribune, 13 May 2024, www.texastribune.org/2024/05/13/texas-supreme-court-frozen-embryos-ivf/.