

Everything you wanted to know about sperm

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Special thanks to Dr Serge Carrier for organizing this issue and the next issue of the *Journal of Sexual and Reproductive Medicine*. Both provide excellent reviews of our current knowledge of male infertility and assisted reproductive technology. Patients we see are motivated to have their genes passed on and will submit to numerous procedures, aspirations and instillations, and will spend large sums of money. Physicians need to provide patients with practical guidance and support throughout their infertility workup and treatment. Unrealistic expectations can often drive

young couples to unnecessary treatments.

The Summer issue of the journal stimulated much discussion with regard to the 'soon to be released' drugs for erectile dysfunction (ED). Dr Peter Pommerville's review included a table that summarized the properties of present and expected future oral therapies for ED. I do not think it was meant to be a comparison of the efficacy of those therapies, but it was interpreted as such by many readers. It is impossible to adequately compare these therapies without head to head trials.

Male infertility: Specific treatment or assisted reproductive techniques

Serge Carrier MD FRCSC², *Guest Editor*

The management and evaluation of the infertile male have undergone tremendous changes since the first successful in vitro fertilization (IVF) pregnancy 24 years ago. IVF techniques have improved and become more reliable, and these new techniques now allow us to either use a single sperm from the ejaculate semen or to harvest a single sperm directly from the genital tract to inseminate the ovula (ICSI). These techniques give men, for whom it was impossible 10 years ago to induce a pregnancy, the opportunity to have children of their own. Because of the success of assisted reproductive technologies, clinicians often wonder

whether it is worthwhile to evaluate men who present for infertility or offer other treatments to men who present for infertility.

The Autumn and Winter issues of the *Journal of Sexual and Reproductive Medicine* review the evaluation and management of the infertile couple, with an emphasis on the male factor, and allow the reader to better understand the place of these new techniques in the treatment of infertile couples. After reading these two issues, clinicians should be able to guide their patients in the decisions they will face while undergoing infertility treatment.

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