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Experimental Treatment Offers Hope of Fertility for Early Menopausal Women

New pilot study suggests that administration of platelet-rich plasma and gonadotropins might restore ovarian function in women during early menopause

CLEVELAND, Ohio (March 31, 2021)—Menopause typically signals the end of a woman’s ability to become pregnant. However, in a small new study, a novel approach of administering platelet-rich plasma and gonadotropins near the ovarian follicles is showing promise in restoring ovarian function. Study results are published online today in *Menopause*, the journal of The North American Menopause Society (NAMS).

As more women look to build their careers before pursuing motherhood, the average age of conceiving a child continues to be pushed back. For some of these women, however, their hope of becoming pregnant is cut short by the onset of early menopause, which is described as the cessation of ovarian function at or before the age of 45 years. It is estimated that roughly 12.2% of women experience early menopause. For these women, the only chance of becoming pregnant is with donor eggs.

Multiple treatment options have previously been investigated, including standard, controlled ovarian stimulation. Platelet-rich plasma has been used in women with primary ovarian insufficiency, but few pregnancies and live births resulted. With the failure of these somewhat traditional treatments, more novel approaches, such as methods for inducing the growth of ovarian follicles, are being pursued.

In this new, small-scale pilot study, platelet-rich plasma and gonadotropins were injected into the ovaries of study participants, with some fairly amazing results. After treatment, 11 of the 12 study participants resumed menstruation, and one achieved clinical pregnancy, defined as a pregnancy that is confirmed by ultrasound as well as a fetal heartbeat.

Although more research and larger studies are needed, these early results regarding the successful resumption of ovarian function offer hope to women in early menopause who may be able to pursue pregnancy through in vitro fertilization using their own eggs.

Results are published in the article “Resumed ovarian function and pregnancy in early menopausal women by whole dimension subcortical ovarian administration of platelet-rich plasma and gonadotropins.”

“This pilot study investigating the use of platelet-rich plasma and gonadotropins injected into the ovaries of women with early menopause highlights the promise of regenerative medicine in restoring or prolonging fertility. Additional studies conducted prospectively and involving large numbers of women are needed to determine whether this is truly a viable option for women with early menopause hoping to achieve pregnancy using their own eggs,” says Dr. Stephanie Faubion, NAMS medical director.

For more information about menopause and healthy aging, visit www.menopause.org.

Founded in 1989, The North American Menopause Society (NAMS) is North America’s leading nonprofit organization dedicated to promoting the health and quality of life of all women during midlife and beyond through an understanding of menopause and healthy aging. Its multidisciplinary membership of 2,000 leaders in the field—including clinical and basic science experts from medicine, nursing, sociology, psychology, nutrition, anthropology, epidemiology, pharmacy, and education—makes NAMS uniquely qualified to serve as the definitive resource for health professionals and the public for accurate, unbiased information about menopause and healthy aging. To learn more about NAMS, visit www.menopause.org.