



Just the Facts: The Safety of In Vitro Fertilization (IVF)

IVF is a safe and proven medical procedure.

The overarching safety of IVF has been extensively studied and affirmed. Advancements in medical technology, fueled by investments in medical research, have significantly improved its safety.

While it is true that IVF is associated with certain risks, most babies born through IVF are healthy. Moreover, it's important to contextualize these risks within the broader landscape of reproductive medicine.

The risk of congenital disabilities in the general population is 2%-3% and is slightly higher among patients with fertility problems (reproductivefacts.org). Importantly, regardless of assisted reproductive technology (ART) use, the disease of infertility is linked to a higher risk of obstetric complications and congenital malformations. Individuals dealing with infertility may tend to be older and have underlying health conditions like hypertension, diabetes, thyroid disorders, or polycystic ovarian syndrome (PCOS). These factors can increase the likelihood of adverse obstetric and perinatal outcomes, potentially leading to long-term health implications (Hart & Wijs, 2022).

IVF pregnancies often entail heightened monitoring to pre-empt and address potential health risks. For example, medications used to boost egg production can elevate the chances of ovarian hyperstimulation syndrome (OHSS). This condition, the severe form of which affects 0.1% to 2% of IVF pregnancies, can lead to fluid leakage into the abdomen (Zheng, et al., 2023). To mitigate related risks, office visits for ultrasound exams to measure the ovaries and fluid in the abdomen and blood tests are routinely done (Reproductivefacts.org).

Importantly, IVF is also highly regulated. For additional information about the oversight of IVF, visit: <https://www.asrm.org/advocacy-and-policy/fact-sheets-and-one-pagers/oversight-of-art/>.