

In Vitro Fertilization Timeline

1820 - 1860 1870 1880 1890 1900 1910 1920 1930 1940 1950 1960 1970 1980 1990 2000

1827

Scientists first learn that the female body contains eggs, called ova.

1884

First recorded case of artificial insemination by donor.

1891

Professor and Physician Walter Heape reported the first known case of embryo transplantation involving rabbits.

1910

Former president Theodore Roosevelt declares, "The greatest of all curses in the cause of sterility; and the severest of all condemnations should be ...visited upon willful sterility."

1944

Dr John Rock & Miriam Menkin experiments yields the first successful IVF of human eggs. They do not attempt to implant the fertilized eggs in a woman. The published account of the research generates great interest.

1966

The National Institutes of Health sets out standards for all research performed by its grantees. In addition, the Dept. of Health, Education, and Welfare issues an order governing all clinical research conducted with federal grants.

1969

A Harris poll shows that a majority of Americans believe techniques like IVF are "against God's Will"

1978

On July 25th, Louise Joy Brown is born, she is the world's first test tube baby
August: Harris poll finds that 60% of Americans support IVF

1981

December: Elizabeth Jordan Carr, America's first test tube baby is born

2004

In vitro fertilization has become a mainstream medical technology. There are some half a million test tube babies in the world, and about 450 IVF clinics in the US alone

Human Reproduction Research

1873

The book Sex in Education, written by Harvard doctor Edward Clarke, argues that having a college education contributes to sterility among young women.

1843

Scientist discover that conception takes place when a sperm from them the male reproductive system enters an ovum.

1922

The Committee for Research in Problems of Sex is founded and spends much of the next 20 years supporting research in the field of reproductive endocrinology (the study of reproductive hormones). The research was principally funded by the Rockefeller Foundation.

1934

Harvard scientist Gregory Pincus conducts IVF experiments involving rabbits that suggest similar fertilization is possible in humans.

1958

Dr. Bob Edwards research revealed each stage of human egg maturation was timed and in-vitro fertilization of human eggs was achieved.

1949

Pope Pius XII condemns any fertilization of human eggs outside the body, declaring that those who do so "take the Lord's work into their own hands"

1979

March: In the U.S., after holding 11 public meetings, the Ethics Advisory Board approves federal funding of IVF research

1975

The U.S. Government decides that federal grants can only be used for fetal research if they are first approved by a National Ethics Advisory Board, effectively freezing IVF research in the United States throughout the mid-1970s.

1997

The first cloned animal, a sheep named Dolly is born. Three-quarters of Americans surveyed in a Time/CNN poll consider cloning "against the will of God"

1987

The Vatican issues an official statement opposing IVF

In Vitro Fertilization (IVF)