

3rd Single Birth Recorded

Fertility Drug Tried Successfully Here

By HOWARD F. ANGIONE
Telegram Staff Reporter

Getting just one baby instead of four or five is the real challenge in giving women a new fertility drug which has attracted worldwide attention, and researchers at City Hospital have recorded their third such success.

The success is a 7-pound, 12-ounce baby boy born to Dr. and Mrs. Julio M. Cortes of 31 Washington St., Shrewsbury, their first child since they were married in 1954. Dr. Cortes is a staff scientist at the Worcester

Foundation for Experimental Biology in Shrewsbury.

The baby, named Julio Eugene, was born in City Hospital Sept. 3 and is now home with his parents, but Dr. Eugenia Rosenberg, director of the Medical Research Institute at the hospital, disclosed only yesterday that Mrs. Cortes had undergone treatment there.

Controlled Doses

The therapy involves administering carefully controlled doses of a substitute for a certain hormone — one of the body's thousands of complex regu-

latory chemicals — which is deficient in some women and thereby prevents them from becoming pregnant.

Under normal conditions, the hormone is manufactured by a woman's pituitary gland, a small, reddish-gray mass of tissue near the base of the brain, and travels to her ovaries where it stimulates the production of eggs for fertilization.

If too much of the delicate substitute hormone — now often identified as "Pergonal," the trade name used by a United

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PROUD MOTHER AND NEW SON
Mrs. Julio M. Cortes holds Julio Eugene

Drug Tried Successfully

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States drug company which is preparing it on an experimental basis — is given, however, it may overstimulate a woman's ovaries.

If so, the ovaries release several eggs at one time, and results ranging from twins to quintuplets have been reported.

Although most of the previously barren women have been happy with their new-found families, the prospect of multiple births has worried many others who might benefit from the treatment — estimates are that it can be effective for about 10 per cent of those women who are infertile.

Treatment's Success

City Hospital claims the first successful birth to a previously sterile woman who had undergone the treatment — a baby girl born there in 1961. The second success was a baby boy born Feb. 27, 1964, in City Hospital, and at that time Dr. Rosenberg made the first public announcement of the treat-

ment. It is only after this test dose that a treatment can be safely given with little risk of a multiple birth, Dr. Rosenberg explained.

After one month's course of medication, Dr. Rosenberg said, she holds back on repeating the medication for a month or two to assess the results, because some women experience a "rebound" effect — the one treatment is enough to jolt their systems so that they begin to operate normally, or close to it, and no longer need medication.

The first woman who gave birth to a baby after treatment at the institute conceived while under medication, Dr. Rosenberg said. The second experienced the "rebound" phenomenon and conceived a month or so after the medication, and Mrs. Cortes was in her first full course of medication.

Dr. Rosenberg said several other married women are in various stages of treatment at the institute. Also among those who have been treated are sev-

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Dr. Rosenberg said yesterday the woman who had a baby in 1964 has not required additional treatment and is pregnant again. She hopes the research will record its fourth baby within about two months when a woman in Indianapolis, Ind., who came here for treatment, is expected to give birth.

Births of several sets of twins were revealed by Columbia-Presbyterian Medical Center in New York last fall. Quintuplets were born to a mother in New Zealand this August. Quintuplets were born two days later to a Swedish woman although only one survived. And the drug was linked with stillborn sextuplets and septuplets in Sweden.

Dr. Rosenberg said yesterday the need to develop standards which will enable physicians to tailor dosages of the drug to each woman's own unique needs, and the stringent restrictions on experimental drugs by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration are responsible for the slow pace in the drug's development here.

Undergoes Study

Before any woman undergoes treatment at the City Hospital institute, she is given a complete study without medication to determine precisely her basic physical condition, Dr. Rosenberg said.

Then she is given an extremely small test dose of the hormone substitute. It is too small to actually induce ovulation, but, through urine analysis and other tests, it is sufficient to indicate just how sensitive her ovaries are to it.

Because the sensitivity of a woman's ovaries varies widely,

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Dr. Rosenberg said several other married women are in various stages of treatment at the institute. Also among those who have been treated are several unmarried women who had experienced irregular menstrual cycles or none at all, and data obtained from their cases has helped advance the knowledge needed to use the hormone drug accurately.

The hormone used in the treatment is obtained in quantity by an elaborate process that extracts it from the urine of women who have passed the menopause.

Dr. Alexander Albert of the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minn., is credited with beginning the pioneering work in developing the purification technique in the early 1950s. It has been improved upon in further research by him, and by various pharmaceutical houses here and abroad.

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