

The emotional impact of infertility on the stages of the assisted reproduction (pp. 95-113)

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The main objective of this investigation was to investigate the stress and the anxiety of the couples when they are subjected to the technology of assisted reproduction. It was decided to study assisted reproduction rather than infertility in general with the purpose of evaluating the emotional factors due to the use of available technologies. This work evaluated stress and anxiety in couples submitted to assisted reproduction, with an infertility period that ranged from 1 to 17 years, the moment just before the oocyte retrieval and/or semen sample. For anxiety evaluation the State Trait Anxiety Inventory (STAI) was applied, and stress was evaluated using the Scope-Stress Inventory. The Identification Form included information such as age, gender, nationality, profession, occupation, religion, school level, monthly income, marital status, married time and issues such as infertility period, existence of natural or adoptive children, professionals involved in infertility treatment, existence of previous attempts and the moments of major emotional stress during the previous attempts and during the present one. In all cases, one of the moments of major emotional stress was waiting for the confirmation of pregnancy. Women showed a significantly higher anxiety degree than men regarding trait-anxiety and similar degree in state-anxiety.