



Fertility and the LGBTQ Community

My wife and I started our fertility journey in 2016, a year after we were married. We really didn't know where to start since we were two women who knew little to nothing about how we could make a baby. We were aware it wouldn't happen accidentally. Initially we decided since I was 34 years old at the time and my wife 44 years old that I would be the one to carry.

I made an appointment with an obstetrician who unfortunately didn't lead us in a good direction. With little experience he thought he could simply perform an IUI as long as we bought the sperm from the sperm bank.

The first time we went to get the procedure done we literally carried the big heavy canister to the office (seat belted in the car like Ellen Degeneres and Sharon Stone's canister in the movie "If These Walls Could Talk 2.") It was very comical. After two failed attempts of IUI with inexperienced Doctors we were referred, by a friend, to a very well known, highly successful head of fertility medicine at an extremely reputable hospital.

When we first met him he questioned why we didn't start with him in the first place because fertility medicine has advanced so much in recent years. It's as if he wanted to admonish us for not getting the care we deserved and he was 100 percent right! Now that we were finally at the right doctor our journey started moving forward!

Our eyes were completely opened by getting my genetics evaluated by a genetics blood test. I think unless there is a clear family history of genetic disorders we all seem to think that we wouldn't be a carrier for anything. Well that is what I thought until we got my results back. Apparently I am a carrier for a disease that if my partner/ donor is also a carrier there is a 1 in 4 chance the child would be born with the genetic disease. Having this information was vital in our journey and also priceless information for having a healthy child! Since we could choose our donor sperm we could make sure that he was not a carrier.

Once finding the right doctor, the right care and choosing the right donor we finally had a date for the first IUI.

Amazingly, the first IUI worked and our first son was born in 2017!

A year later we decided that we wanted more children and I would carry the child again.

This time we went through a few IUIs that were not successful. We also wanted our children to be 100 percent siblings and we were slowly running out of donor sperm so we decided to start IVF.

Working in a highly stressful career as a first responder I found myself having to do my injections at work. After a few days of practice it became second nature. I was extremely lucky to produce 29 eggs for retrieval. Although I physically didn't feel lucky, I truly felt very sick up to and even weeks after egg retrieval.

14 embryos were made and we decided to get them genetically tested and ended up with 5 healthy embryos.

The first transfer was unsuccessful. However, the second transfer worked. Our doctor only transferred one embryo at a time. 9 weeks later we found out what we thought was one healthy baby turned out to be identical twin boys! We were shocked and exhilarated!

I have to say that twin pregnancy is very high risk and we had serious complications that threatened the twins lives but we were able to get through them with the help of extremely competent doctors and our beautiful miracles were born in 2020! I carried and delivered three beautiful boys successfully and we are so very grateful to our amazing doctors and the support of family and friends.

Our story continues! We decided we wanted more children and that my wife would be the one to carry.

Her being ten years older, our doctors made sure she went to a few specialists, most importantly a cardiologist in order to be cleared to carry. Having the full information on the risks to her health and the potential babies health was very important to us and our doctors.

We are so happy to announce she is three months pregnant with a baby girl who we cannot wait to meet!

We have learned a great deal about fertility going through this process and we believe the most important thing we did was see medical professionals who are specialists in fertility as well as pursued genetics testing. As lesbians our IVF journey has been a very positive experience. We feel lucky to live in an area where we are treated with respect, dignity and equality by everyone we experience in the medical field. During our fertility journey and also going through the complicated twin pregnancy we were always treated as equals to any other married couple. We feel lucky that we found the right doctors who not only made us feel comfortable but who also played a huge roll in our success.