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**GENESIS NETWORK FOR REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH AWARDED GRANT TO
STUDY USE OF PGD IN LOWERING MULTIFETAL PREGNANCY RATES IN THE
UNITED STATES**

*Study Designed to Offer Women New Data for Increased Chances for Pregnancy Success
Through IVF Without Associated Health and Financial Risks of Multiple Births*

IRVINE, Calif, March 4, 2004 – The GENESIS Network for Reproductive Health, an independent group of nationally noted fertility specialists, was awarded a grant for a study to investigate the role that Preimplantation Genetic Diagnosis (PGD), combined with in-vitro fertilization (IVF), plays in reducing the occurrence of multiple births (multifetal pregnancies). The grant entitled “Preimplantation Genetic Diagnosis as a Tool to Lower Multifetal Pregnancy Rates,” was announced today by Dr. Lawrence Werlin, the study’s principal investigator and the co-founder of GENESIS.

The study is in response to research indicating multiple birth rates in the United States are alarmingly high, having increased 59 percent in the last two decades. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reports an estimated two-thirds of triplet or higher births are the result of fertility-enhancing therapies with indications that the trend and rate increase will continue.

PGD is a therapeutic and genetic testing tool that aids in the IVF process by screening for abnormal chromosomes in fertilized eggs (embryos) to help increase chances for pregnancy success.

“Through the study, we are speculating that PGD may be the antidote to minimizing the occurrence of multiple births occurring as a result of IVF’s success,” Dr. Werlin said. “By using PGD to screen for the healthiest embryos, we aim to show that transferring two or less embryos to the woman can equally achieve pregnancy success while lowering the rate of multiple births. PGD assists by detecting genetic abnormalities in an embryo which may otherwise go undetected and negatively affect a pregnancy outcome.”

Couples hoping to increase pregnancy success often opt to implant three or more embryos which results in a higher number of multiple birth pregnancies and greater health concerns such as maternal anemia, low infant birth weights and cerebral palsy rates. According to the March of Dimes, multiple birth babies are nearly six times more likely to be delivered pre-term than singletons and the more babies in the womb, the greater the risk of pre-term delivery.

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“The study will evaluate current data which demonstrates limiting the number of embryos transferred in IVF would significantly reduce maternal and infant health risks associated with multiple births,” Dr. Werlin said. “The data collected and analyzed will offer vital information to the health community and mass public. It may also lead to other advances in reproductive medicine such as an increase in insurance coverage for fertility treatments.”

The randomized study will examine two groups of patients, both undergoing assisted reproductive treatments with only two embryos transferred. One group will remain the control and one will use PGD to screen for chromosomal abnormalities to help avert miscarriages and receive only the healthiest embryos.

Last year, Dr. Werlin led GENESIS on a PGD study, earning national acclaim. The study gave women in high-risk categories, including women 38 years and older and those with recurring pregnancy loss, answers never before made available regarding their chances for increasing pregnancy success through in-vitro fertilization. The study concluded that PGD can facilitate a successful pregnancy and avoid in-vitro fertilization failures due to chromosomal imbalances.

Dr. Werlin is a leader in reproductive technology, research, education and patient services, and co-founder of GENESIS Network for Reproductive Health, a team of nationally noted fertility specialists. He is founder and director of Coastal Fertility Medical Center in Irvine, California. Dr. Werlin is a member of the American Society of Reproductive Medicine, Pacific Coast Reproductive Society, and the Society of Assisted Reproductive Technologies, an organization in which he held national office from 1991-2000. Werlin is currently leading GENESIS in a continuation study regarding the effects of PGD.

For more information, visit www.genesisivf.com or www.coastalfertility.com.

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Editor’s Note: interviews can be arranged with Dr. Lawrence Werlin by calling (949) 726-0600