

NATIONAL SURVEY INDICATES FERTILITY INDUSTRY SHOULD BE MORE RESPONSIVE TO MULTIPLE PREGNANCIES

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Wasaga Beach, Ontario – A recent survey administered by Multiple Births Canada (MBC) indicates the fertility industry is not consistent in how it educates and counsels families on the risks and challenges of a multiple pregnancy.

The online survey invited multiple-birth families across Canada to share opinions and thoughts regarding their personal infertility experiences and rate how well they were educated and counseled by the fertility industry on the possibility of complications associated with a multiple pregnancy. The results were released to coincide with the celebration of the 2008 National Multiple Births Awareness Day theme: **"Multiple Births Canada encourages all health care professionals providing fertility advice and/or treatments to fully disclose all risks associated with a multiple pregnancy and birth, including all negative and positive outcomes, to enable patients to make informed decisions."**

Specifically, respondents gave a failing grade to the following statements:

- "They provided me with literature relevant to my situation." – 52.3% disagreed or strongly disagreed.
- "They provided me with opportunities to discuss the potential impact of a multiples pregnancy." – 48.9% disagreed or strongly disagreed.
- "They stressed the long-term medical implications of a multiple pregnancy." – 55% disagreed or strongly disagreed.

When asked "Do you think your fertility specialist/clinic needs to know more about the risks of a multiple pregnancy?", one-third of the respondents answered—yes. Only one-third of respondents answered—no; the final third were not sure.

"There appears to be an inconsistency in how the fertility industry counsels its patients. Some survey respondents praised their specialists, while others commented they should have been offered a lot more information about the risks of a multiple pregnancy before starting IVF," said Gail Moore, Director of Communications. Multiple Births Canada is calling for Canadian health care professionals providing fertility advice and/or treatments to fully educate their patients early in the process. MBC believes information provided to patients should include that there is increased risk of death and disability for multiple-birth babies, more complications for the mother during pregnancy, and longer-term consequences for the welfare of multiple-birth families. Additionally, if the conception results in a multiple pregnancy, Multiple Births Canada believes it is critical that patients receive timely referral to early specialized prenatal education and parenting information.

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