Examining the Relationship Between Infertility and Previous Chlamydia Infection

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Project Identifier Case Control Study of Chlamydia and Tubal Factor Infertility Among Women Presenting for Infertility Evaluation or Treatment - SIP 11-048

Funding Source Division of STD Prevention

Project Status Active

Host Institution University of Pittsburgh: Center for Healthy Aging
University of Alabama at Birmingham: Center for the Study of Community Health

Health Topics Sexual health

*Chlamydia trachomatis* infection is the most commonly reported sexually transmitted infection in the United States. Chlamydia is the leading preventable cause of tubal factor infertility (TFI), a disorder in which the fallopian tubes are blocked or damaged, preventing the passage of eggs to the uterus. Accurate estimates of TFI resulting from chlamydia infection are difficult to obtain, in part because definitive diagnosis of the condition can be complex and often requires diagnosis by a specialist. Most people who have chlamydia do not know they have an infection because symptoms often do not occur.

Researchers from two PRCs, the University of Pittsburgh and the University of Alabama at Birmingham, are addressing the existing TFI knowledge gaps by studying women who are infertile. Researchers aim to determine how often TFI is attributable to chlamydia infection, characterize the frequency of TFI relative to other causes of infertility, and determine how race impacts the risk and frequency of TFI and the use of assisted reproductive technology (ART).

Researchers will enroll a total of 675 women aged 20-42 from each of two sites—225 will be enrolled from a fertility clinic in Birmingham and 450 women will be enrolled from a fertility center and a radiology department at the University of Pittsburgh. A total of 225 women with TFI diagnosed by a specialist and 450 women with infertility but not TFI will be enrolled in the study. Women will be asked to share their medical records with research staff and respond to interviews about their demographic characteristics, previous sexually transmitted infections, infertility diagnosis, and use of assisted reproductive therapy. Researchers will request blood samples and test them for chlamydia antibodies to determine past chlamydia infections. Prior to data collection, the two PRCs and CDC will work together to establish the study protocol, surveys, laboratory methods, and data analysis. The data collected by the PRCs will be compiled and analyzed at the CDC to develop national recommendations for infertility prevention in the United States.

Research setting
No specific focus

Race or ethnicity
No specific focus

Gender
Women or girls

Age group
Adults (25-49 years)

CDC PRC Research Projects Database - https://ncdddev.cdc.gov/PRCResearchProjects/