

# Glossary of Acronyms and Terms

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## *Glossary of Acronyms*

AATB	—American Association of Tissue Banks	FSH	Resistance to Reproductive and Genetic Engineering
ACOG	—American College of obstetricians and Gynecologists	FTC	—follicle-stimulating hormone
AFDC	—Aid to Families with Dependent Children (DHHS)	GIFT	—U.S. Federal Trade Commission
AFS	—American Fertility Society	GnRH	—gamete intrafallopian transfer
AGI	—Alan Guttmacher Institute	hCG	—gonadotropin releasing hormone
AI	—artificial insemination	HIV	—human chorionic gonadotropin
AIDS	—acquired immunodeficiency syndrome	hMG	—human immunodeficiency virus
AMA	—American Medical Association	HMO	—human menopausal gonadotropin
BBT	—basal body temperature	HSG	—health maintenance organization
BC/BS	—Blue Cross/Blue Shield Associations	IEC	—hysterosalpingogram
CAHBI	—Ad Hoc Committee of Experts on Progress in the Biomedical Sciences (Council of Europe)	INSERM	—Institutional Ethics Committee (Australia)
c c	-clomiphene citrate		—Institut National de la Santé et de la Recherche Médicale (National Health and Medical Research Institute) (France)
CCNE	-Comité Consultatif National d'Éthique (National Advisory Ethics Committee) (France)	IRB	—Institutional Review Board
CDC	-Centers for Disease Control (PHS, DHHS)	IUD	—intrauterine device
CECOS	-Centres d'Étude et de la Conservation du Sperm (Centers for the Study and Conservation of Sperm) (France)	IVF	—in vitro fertilization
CFR	-Code of Federal Regulations	JCAHO	—Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations
CHAMPUS	-Civilian Health and Medical Program of the Uniformed Services (U.S. Department of Defense)	LH	—luteinizing hormone
CHAMPVA	-Civilian Health and Medical Program of the Veterans' Administration (VA)	LH-RH	—luteinizing hormone-releasing hormone
CMV	-cytomegalovirus	LPD	—luteal phase defect
CNFA	-Comisión Nacional de Fecundación Asistida (National Commission on Assisted Reproduction) (Spain)	MREC	—Medical Research Ethics Committee (Australia)
CON	-certificate of need	NCHS	—National Center for Health Statistics (DHHS)
DES	-diethylstilbestrol	NHMRC	—National Health and Medical Research Council (Australia)
DHHS	—U.S. Department of Health and Human Services	NIH	—National Institutes of Health (PHS, DHHS)
DNA	-deoxyribonucleic acid	NMCUES	—National Medical Care Utilization and Expenditure Survey
EAB	—Ethics Advisory Board	NPT	—nocturnal penile tumescence
FDA	—Food and Drug Administration (PHS, DHHS)	NSFG	—National Survey on Family Growth (NCHS, DHHS)
FEHB	—Federal Employees Health Benefits Plan	OHSS	—ovarian hyperstimulation syndrome
FINRRAGE	—Feminist International Network of	OHTA	—Office of Health Technology Assessment (PHS, DHHS)
		OTA	—Office of Technology Assessment
		PHS	—U.S. Public Health Service (DHHS)
		PID	—pelvic inflammatory disease
		POD	—polycystic ovarian disease
		ProPAC	—Prospective Payment Assessment Commission (U.S. Congress)
		PTSD	—post-traumatic stress disorder
		PVA	—Paralyzed Veterans of America

SLA	—Statutory Licencing Authority (U. K.)
STD	—sexually transmitted disease
TEC	—Technology Evaluation and Coverage Program (BC/BS)
Ucc	—Uniform Commercial Code
VA	—U.S. Veterans' Administration
VLA	—Voluntary Licencing Authority (U. K.)

### *Glossary of Terms*

**Adhesions:** Rubbery bands of scar tissue (usually caused by previous infections or surgery) attached to organ surfaces, capable of connecting, covering, or distorting organs such as the fallopian tubes, ovaries, or bowel. Adhesions in the fallopian tubes and ovaries obstruct the movement of sperm and oocytes.

**Agglutination of sperm:** The binding together of sperm in clumps.

**Amenorrhea:** The absence of menstruation.

**Anovulation:** The absence of ovulation.

**Antibody:** A blood protein (immunoglobulin) produced by white blood cells in response to the presence of a specific foreign substance (antigen) in the body, with which it fights or otherwise interacts. Antibodies to sperm, if present, can impair fertility by causing agglutination of sperm.

**Artificial insemination (AI):** The introduction of sperm into a woman's vagina or uterus by noncoital methods, for the purpose of conception.

**Azoospermia:** The absence of sperm in the semen.

**Basal body temperature (BBT):** A woman's resting temperature upon awakening in the morning before any activity; the temperature rises slightly when ovulation occurs and remains at the higher level until the next menstruation. Recording and charting BBT is one of the oldest and most popular methods for predicting ovulation.

**Blastocyst:** A fluid-filled sphere of cells developed from a zygote. The embryo develops from a small cluster of cells in the center of the sphere, and the outer wall of the sphere becomes the placenta. The blastocyst, also called a preimplantation embryo, begins to implant into the lining of the uterus 6 to 7 days after fertilization.

**Breach of contract:** A party's failure to perform a contractually agreed-upon act.

**Bromocriptine:** A synthetic compound that interferes with the pituitary gland's ability to secrete prolactin. Bromocriptine is often prescribed for hyperprolactinemia.

**Certificate of need (CON):** A regulatory planning measure established by the National Health Planning Resources Development Act of 1974 to help State and local health planning agencies review capital expend-

iture applications from institutions, and to explore other ways of reducing medical costs.

**Cervical mucus:** Mucus produced by the cervix that undergoes complex changes in its physical properties in response to changing hormone levels during the reproductive cycle. These changes assist the survival and transport of sperm.

**Chimera:** An individual consisting of cells or tissues of diverse genetic constitution (e.g., from different species).

**Chlamydia:** An STD caused by the bacteria *Chlamydia trachomatis*. In women, chlamydial infection accounts for 25 to 50 percent of the pelvic inflammatory disease cases seen each year. Chlamydia is the most common STD in the United States today.

**Choice-of-law:** Body of law by which a court determines which State or country's laws ought to apply to the case before the court.

**Chromosomal abnormalities:** Genetic mutations involving changes in the number and structure of chromosomes. This can affect fertility through early fetal loss caused by genetic factors, impairment in the reproductive function in an adult caused by chromosomal abnormalities already present, or by genetic predisposition toward certain diseases, such as endometriosis.

**Chromosome A** rod-shaped body in a cell nucleus that carries the genes that convey hereditary characteristics.

**Cleavage:** The stage of cell division that takes place immediately after fertilization and that lasts until the cells begin to segregate and differentiate and to develop into a blastocyst.

**Clomiphene citrate:** A nonsteroidal estrogen-like compound that binds to estrogen receptors in the body. CC is a commonly prescribed fertility drug, primarily used in patients with oligomenorrhea to promote increased gonadotropin secretion and stimulation of the ovary.

**Conceptus:** The mass of cells resulting from the earliest stages of cell division of a zygote.

**Confidentiality:** A fundamental component of the physician-patient relationship, stemming primarily from the Hippocratic oath, in which the physician has the duty to keep confidential all that is confided by the patient.

**Consensus conference** A meeting of experts held under the auspices of the NIH Consensus Development Program (established in 1977), to develop consensus on the clinical application of new medical findings.

**Corpus luteum:** A gland that forms on the surface of the ovary at the site of ovulation and produces progesterone during the second half of the menstrual cycle, in order to prepare the uterus for a

- possible pregnancy. The corpus luteum regresses if pregnancy does not occur.
- Cryopreservation:** The preservation of sperm, embryos, and oocytes by freezing them at extremely low temperatures.
- Cryptorchidism:** Undescended testes.
- Damages:** Monetary compensation that the law awards to a person who has been injured by the actions of another.
- Danazol:** A synthetic derivative of testosterone used in the treatment of endometriosis.
- Diagnostic tests:** Tests performed to evaluate reproductive health. In women, this can involve indirect indicators (menstrual irregularity, hormone levels, cervical mucus) and direct ones (tissue biopsy, laparoscopy, ultrasound). In men, tests include semen analysis, endocrine evaluation, testicular biopsy, and evaluation of sexual dysfunction.
- Dictum (pi. dicta):** A statement or observation in a judicial opinion that is not necessary for the decision on the case. Dictum differs from a "holding" in that it is not binding on the courts in subsequent cases.
- Deoxyribonucleic acid (DNA):** The nucleic acid in chromosomes that codes for genetic information.
- Donor gametes:** Eggs or sperm donated by individuals for medically assisted conception.
- Ectopic pregnancy:** A pregnancy that occurs outside the uterus, usually in a fallopian tube.
- Ejaculation:** A two-part spinal reflex that involves emission, when the semen moves into the urethra, and ejaculation proper, when it is propelled out of the urethra at the time of orgasm.
- Electroejaculation:** Electrical stimulation of the nerve that controls ejaculation, used to obtain semen from men with spinal cord injuries.
- Embryo:** Term used to describe the stages of growth from the second to the ninth week following conception. During this period cell differentiation proceeds rapidly and the brain, eyes, heart, upper and lower limbs, and other organs are formed.
- Embryo donation:** The transfer from one woman to another of an embryo obtained by artificial insemination and lavage or, more commonly, by WF.
- Embryo lavage:** A flushing of the uterus to recover a preimplantation embryo.
- Embryo transfer:** The transfer of an in vitro fertilized egg from its laboratory dish into the uterus of a woman.
- Endometrial biopsy:** The microscopic examination of a sample of cells, obtained from the lining of the uterus between days 22 and 25 of a normal 28-day menstrual cycle, in order to evaluate ovulatory function.
- Endometriosis:** The presence of endometrial tissue (the normal uterine lining) in abnormal locations such as the fallopian tubes, ovaries, or the peritoneal cavity. Endometriosis can interfere with nearly every phase of the reproductive cycle and is a leading contributor to infertility in women. The causes and development of endometriosis are incompletely understood.
- Endometrium:** The tissue lining the uterus.
- Epididymis:** A coiled tubular structure in the male that receives sperm moving from the testis to the vas deferens. Sperm are stored and matured for a period of several weeks in the epididymis.
- Epididymitis:** Infection of the epididymis, usually from an STD, such as gonorrhea, that can impair fertility during the course of the infection, as well as causing scarring that can partially or completely block sperm transport.
- Estrogen:** A class of steroid hormones, produced mainly by the ovaries from puberty to menopause.
- Ethics Advisory Board:** Established within the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare to review proposals for Federal funding of research involving IVF. The Ethics Advisory Board ceased to function in 1980.
- Experimental technology or treatment:** A technology or treatment the safety and efficacy of which has not been established.
- Extracorporeal embryo:** An embryo maintained outside the body.
- Fallopian tube:** Either of a pair of tubes that conduct the egg from the ovary to the uterus. Fertilization normally occurs within this structure. Blocked or scarred fallopian tubes are a leading source of infertility in women.
- Fecund:** Able to conceive. A characterization used by demographers to identify couples who have no known physical problem that prevents conception.
- Fern test:** Evaluation of fern-like pattern of dried cervical mucus. As ovulation approaches, more ferning can be observed.
- Fertility drugs:** Compounds used to treat ovulatory dysfunction. These include clomiphene citrate, human gonadotropins, bromocriptine, glucocorticoids, and progesterone.
- Fertilization:** The penetration of an oocyte by a sperm and subsequent combining of maternal and paternal DNA.
- Fetus:** The embryo becomes a fetus after approximately 9 weeks in the uterus. This stage of development lasts from 9 weeks until birth and is marked by the growth and specialization of organ function.
- Fimbria:** The fringed entrance to the fallopian tubes.
- Fimbrioplasty:** A surgical procedure to correct partial restriction of the fallopian tube.

- First Amendment:** The First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution. It guarantees freedom of speech, press, assembly, petition, and exercise of religion.
- Follicle:** The structure on the ovary surface that nurtures a ripening oocyte. At ovulation the follicle ruptures and the oocyte is released. The follicle produces estrogen until the oocyte is released, after which it becomes a yellowish protrusion on the ovary called the corpus luteum.
- Follicle stimulating hormone (FSH):** A pituitary hormone, also known as a gonadotropin, that along with other hormones stimulates hormone and gamete production by the testes and ovaries.
- Fourteenth Amendment:** The Fourteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution. It guarantees due process of law and equal protection of the law. The latter has come to mean that the States and Federal Government may not discriminate without at least a rational purpose and, at times, without a compelling purpose.
- Fundamental right:** A right not enumerated in the U.S. Constitution but deemed so apparent from examination of the Constitution and Declaration of Independence or other sources that it is protected from undue interference by Federal or State action. The right to marry, for example, has been deemed a fundamental right.
- Gamete** A reproductive cell. In a man, the gametes are sperm; in a woman, they are eggs, or ova.
- Gamete intrafallopian transfer (GIFT):** A technique of medically assisted conception in which mature oocytes are surgically removed from a woman's body and then reintroduced, together with sperm, through a catheter threaded into the fallopian tubes, where it is hoped fertilization will take place.
- Gene:** The portion of a DNA molecule that consists of an ordered sequence of nucleotide bases and constitutes the basic unit of heredity.
- Glucocorticoids:** Hormones naturally produced by the adrenal glands. Synthetic glucocorticoids are used to treat ovulatory dysfunction caused by adrenal disorders.
- Gonad:** Ovary or testis.
- Gonadotropin:** Hormone that stimulates the testes or ovaries. Examples are follicle-stimulating hormone, human chorionic gonadotropin, human menopausal gonadotropin, and luteinizing hormone. These can be administered in cases of ovulatory dysfunction to directly stimulate the ovary.
- Gonadotropin releasing hormone (GnRH):** The hormone released from the hypothalamus that causes secretion of gonadotropin from the pituitary gland.
- Gonorrhea:** An STD caused by the bacteria *Alesseria gonorrhoea*. If the infection is not treated in women, it can spread to the uterus and the fallopian tubes, causing PID. In men, it can cause epididymitis and can affect semen quality.
- Hamster-oocyte penetration test:** A test that evaluates the ability of human sperm to penetrate an ovum by incubating sperm with hamster oocytes that have had their outer layer removed. Normal sperm will penetrate the eggs. The reliability and significance of this test are controversial.
- Health maintenance organization (HMO):** A health care organization that serves as both insurer and provider of comprehensive but specified medical services, provided by a defined group of physicians to an enrolled, fee-paying population.
- Human chorionic gonadotropin (hCG):** A hormone secreted by the embryo that maintains the corpus luteum when pregnancy occurs. This hormone can be extracted from the urine of pregnant women and can be injected to stimulate ovaries and testes.
- Human menopausal gonadotropin (hMG):** Hormone that can be extracted from the urine of menopausal women and injected to stimulate ovaries and testes.
- Hyperprolactinemia:** The overproduction of the pituitary hormone prolactin, which can contribute to infertility. The causes of this condition are diverse and poorly understood. It can be treated with bromocriptine.
- Hypospadias:** A structural abnormality of the penis caused by an opening on the underside.
- Hypothalamus:** A structure at the base of the brain that controls (among other things) the action of the pituitary gland. By secreting and releasing hormones, the hypothalamus orchestrates the body's reproductive function in both men and women.
- Hysterosalpingogram:** An x-ray study of the female reproductive tract in which dye is injected into the uterus while x rays are taken showing the outline of the uterus and the degree of openness of the fallopian tubes.
- Hysteroscopy:** Direct visualization of the interior of the uterus in order to evaluate any abnormalities that may be present. This is done by inserting a hysteroscope (a long, narrow, illuminated tube) through the cervix into the expanded uterus. Surgical procedures may also be performed using this method.
- Iatrogenic** Resulting from the action of physicians. The term is commonly applied to diseases or disabilities caused by medical care.
- Idiopathic** Of unknown origin.
- Impaired fecundity:** Categorization of infertility used by demographers to describe couples who are non-surgically sterile, or for whom it would be difficult or dangerous to have a baby.
- Impotence:** The inability to achieve or maintain an

erection.

**Implantation** The process by which the fertilized oocyte (zygote) becomes attached to the wall of the uterus (endometrium).

**In vitro:** Literally "in glass"; pertaining to a biological process or reaction taking place in an artificial environment, usually a laboratory.

**In vitro fertilization (IVF):** A technique of medically assisted conception (sometimes referred to as "test tube" fertilization) in which mature oocytes are removed from a woman's ovary and fertilized with sperm in a laboratory. (See *embryo transfer*.)

**In vivo:** Literally "in the living"; pertaining to a biological process or reaction taking place in a living cell or organism.

**In vivo fertilization:** The fertilization of an egg by a sperm within a woman's body. The sperm may be introduced by artificial insemination or by coitus.

**Infertility:** Inability of a couple to conceive after 12 months of intercourse without contraception.

**Intracervical insemination:** Artificial insemination technique in which sperm are placed in or near the cervical canal of the female reproductive tract, using a syringe or a catheter, for the purpose of conception.

**Intraperitoneal insemination** An artificial insemination technique in which sperm are introduced into the body cavity between the uterus and the rectum, after ovulation has been induced, for the purpose of conception.

**Intrauterine device (IUD):** Contraceptive device inserted through the cervix into the uterine cavity.

**Intrauterine insemination:** Artificial insemination technique in which sperm are deposited directly in the uterine cavity.

**Karyotype:** A photographic display of an individual's chromosomes that shows the number, size, and shape of each chromosome.

**Laparoscopy:** Direct visualization of the ovaries and the exterior of the fallopian tubes and uterus by means of a laparoscope (a long, narrow, illuminated instrument) introduced through a small surgical incision below the navel, to evaluate any abnormalities. Surgical procedures may also be performed using this method.

**Laparotomy:** A surgical incision through the abdominal wall, larger than that used in a laparoscopy, to allow visualization of reproductive structures for evaluation or surgery.

**Liberty right:** The natural right of a human being, capable of choice, to undertake an action freely and without interference, as long as it does not restrain or injure other persons,

**Luteal phase defect (LPD):** Failure of the endometrial

lining of the uterus to develop properly after ovulation. This condition can be treated with progesterone.

**Luteinizing hormone:** A gonadotropin that along with FSH stimulates and directs hormone and gamete production of the testes and ovaries.

**Luteinizing hormone-releasing hormone (LH-RH):** A hormone secreted by the hypothalamus that acts on the pituitary to promote secretions of gonadotropin that in turn direct hormone and gamete production by the ovaries and testes.

**Menopause:** The cessation of the menstrual cycle, which occurs when the ovary is virtually depleted of oocytes.

**Menstrual cycle:** The process of ovulation in which an oocyte matures each month in a follicle produced on the surface of the ovary. At ovulation, the follicle ruptures and the oocyte is released into the body cavity and enters the fallopian tube. If fertilization and implantation do not occur, the uterine lining is sloughed off, producing menstrual flow. The normal menstrual cycle is about 28 days.

**Microsurgery** Fine, delicate surgical procedures performed with the aid of a microscope or other magnifying apparatus. In cases of infertility, microsurgery is used to repair fallopian tubes in women and blockages of the reproductive tract in men.

**Mycoplasma:** A micro-organism similar to bacteria, but lacking a rigid cell wall. Mycoplasma is associated with reproductive tract infections.

**National Survey of Family Growth:** A survey conducted periodically (1976, 1982, and 1988) by the National Center for Health Statistics (part of DHHS) to collect data on fertility, family planning, and related aspects of maternal and child health.

**Negligence:** Failure to exercise reasonable care.

**Nocturnal penile tumescence (NPT):** The occurrence of erections during sleep.

**Noncoital reproduction:** Reproduction other than by sexual intercourse.

**Oligomenorrhea:** Scanty or infrequent menstruation, a problem found in about 20 percent of infertile women.

**Oligospermia:** Scarcity of sperm in the semen.

**Oocyte:** The female egg or ovum, formed in an ovary.

**Ovaries:** Paired female sex glands in which ova are developed and stored and the hormones estrogen and progesterone are produced.

**Oviduct:** Fallopian tube.

**Ovulation:** The discharge of an oocyte from a woman's ovary, generally around the midpoint of the menstrual cycle.

**Ovulation induction:** Treatment of ovulation dysfunction caused by such disorders as amenorrhea, oligomenorrhea, and LPD, using drugs that induce ovu-

- lation. These so-called fertility drugs include CC and gonadotropins. ovulation induction is also used as part of the AI, IVF, and GIFT techniques.
- Ovulation prediction kits** Over-the-counter hormone monitoring kits that employ the enzyme-linked immunosorbent assay procedure to measure the mid-cycle increase in LH that indicates ovulation is taking place.
- Ovum (pi. ova):** The female egg or oocyte, formed in an ovary.
- Ovum donor:** A woman who donates an ovum or ova to another woman.
- Paternity suit:** A legal action to determine the father of a child.
- Pelvic inflammatory disease (PID):** Inflammatory disease of the pelvis, often caused by an untreated STD. Bacteria that cause gonorrhea, chlamydia, or other infections can ascend from the lower genital tract through the endometrium (causing endometriosis), to the fallopian tubes (causing salpingitis), and possibly to the ovaries (causing oophritis).
- Peritoneal cavity:** The abdominal cavity.
- Pituitary:** A gland at the base of the brain that secretes a number of hormones related to fertility.
- Polycystic ovarian disease (POD):** A disease of the ovaries caused by malfunction of the hormonal system that results in ovaries clogged with cysts, making ovulation almost impossible. The reasons this occurs are unclear.
- Post-coital test:** Microscopic analysis of cervical mucus within a few hours of timed intercourse in order to observe and evaluate the interaction of sperm, semen, and cervical mucus. The oldest and most widely practiced post-coital test is the Sims-Huhner test.
- post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD):** An anxiety disorder involving the development of characteristic symptoms (including sexual dysfunction) following a psychologically traumatic event that is generally outside the range of normal human experience.
- Preimplantation embryo:** The mass of dividing cells of the zygote and the blastocyst that develop in the first 6 to 7 days after fertilization.
- Preovulation:** The first 14 days of a woman's menstrual cycle, when estrogen levels are rising before ovulation takes place.
- Primary infertility:** Infertility in those who have never had children.
- Progesterone:** A steroid hormone secreted by the ovary after ovulation; it may be used to treat LPD.
- Prolactin:** A hormone secreted by the pituitary that stimulates breast milk production and supports gonadal function.
- Prostate gland:** Male gland that supplies part of the fluid of the semen.
- Reasonable care:** The degree of care that under the circumstances would ordinarily be exercised or be expected from the ordinary prudent person; in a professional setting, that care ordinarily exercised or expected from the ordinary prudent professional.
- Regulation:** A rule issued by an administrative agency pursuant to authority granted to the agency by statute.
- Retrograde ejaculation:** Discharge of semen backward into the bladder, rather than out through the penis.
- Retrograde menstruation:** Menstruation that flows backwards through the fallopian tubes.
- Salpingitis:** Inflammation of the fallopian tubes, sometimes caused by PID.
- Salpingostomy** A surgical attempt to recreate the normal fallopian opening and fimbria function in cases of complete occlusion of the fallopian tubes.
- Secondary infertility:** Infertility in those who have previously been fertile.
- Semen:** A fluid consisting of secretions from the male's seminal vesicles, prostate, and from the glands adjacent to the urethra. Semen carries sperm and is ejaculated during intercourse.
- Semen analysis:** Evaluation of the basic characteristics of sperm and semen, such as appearance, volume, liquefaction and viscosity, and sperm concentration and motility. The presence of bacterial infection and immunological disorders can also be determined by semen analysis. It is the fundamental diagnostic method used to evaluate male infertility.
- Sexual dysfunction:** The inability to achieve normal sexual intercourse for reasons such as impotence, premature ejaculation, and retrograde ejaculation in the man or of vaginismus in the woman.
- Sexually transmitted diseases (STDs):** Infectious diseases transmitted primarily by sexual contact, including syphilis, gonorrhea, chlamydia, herpes, and acquired immunodeficiency syndrome.
- Specific performance:** A remedy for breach of contract in which the court orders that the precise terms of the contract be fulfilled, rather than ordering that monetary damages be paid.
- Sperm** The male reproductive cell, or gamete. Normal sperm have symmetrically oval heads, stout mid-sections, and long tapering tails.
- Sperm bank:** A place in which sperm are stored by cryopreservation for future use in artificial insemination.
- Sperm motility:** The ability of a sperm to move normally.
- Sperm washing:** The dilution of a semen sample with

various tissue culture media in order to separate viable sperm from the other components of semen.

**Spinal cord injuries** Injury to the spinal cord causes fertility problems in paraplegic and quadriplegic men, although not generally in women. Because of these conditions sperm quantity and quality may be decreased, there may be erection and ejaculation dysfunction, and infections of the reproductive tract may occur.

**Statute:** Legislation enacted by a legislature.

**Surgically sterile** Surgically rendered unable to conceive or to carry to term by techniques including vasectomy, tubal ligation, and hysterectomy.

**Surrogate gestational mother** A woman who gestates and carries to term an embryo to which she is not genetically related, with the intention of relinquishing the child at birth.

**Surrogate mother** A woman who is artificially inseminated and carries an embryo to term, with the intention of relinquishing the child at birth.

**Testes:** Also known as the testicles, the paired male sex glands in which sperm and the steroid hormone testosterone are produced.

**Testicular biopsy:** The excision of a small sample of testicular tissue for microscopic evaluation to determine sperm production.

**Testosterone:** A steroid hormone, or androgen, produced in the testes that affects sperm production and male sex characteristics.

**Tort:** A private or civil wrong resulting from a breach of a legal duty that exists by virtue of society's legal expectations regarding interpersonal conduct, rather than by virtue of a contractual agreement.

**Tubal ligation:** The sterilization of a woman by surgical excision of a small section of each fallopian tube.

**Ultrasound:** The use of high-frequency sound waves focused on the body to obtain a video image of internal tissues, organs, and structures. Ultrasound is particularly useful for in utero examinations of a developing fetus, for evaluation of the develop-

ment of ovarian follicles, and for the guided retrieval of oocytes for IVF and GIFT.

**Unconstitutional** Conflicting with the provisions of a constitution, usually the U.S. Constitution. Statutory provisions or particular applications of a statutory provision found unconstitutional are thereby rendered void.

**Uniform laws:** Model laws approved by the Commissioners on Uniform Laws and proposed to all the State legislatures for their consideration. Uniform laws have no force or effect unless adopted by a State legislature. The UCC (Uniform Commercial Code) is a uniform law that has been the basis for almost all State commercial codes in the United States.

**Uterine lavage:** A flushing of the uterus to recover a preimplantation embryo.

**Vaginismus:** Involuntary contraction of the muscles around the outer third of the vagina, prohibiting penile entry.

**Varicocele:** An abnormal twisting or dilation of the vein that carries blood from the testes back to the heart; a varicose vein of the testis. It occurs most commonly on the left side.

**Vas deferens:** The convoluted duct that carries sperm from the testis to the ejaculatory duct of the penis.

**Vasectomy:** Sterilization of a man by surgical excision of a part of the vas deferens.

**Lasography:** An x-ray examination of the vas deferens by injection of dye through a small incision. X rays are taken giving an outline of the sperm transport system.

**Void:** Unenforceable and having no legal effect.

**Voidable:** A valid act that may later be rendered unenforceable and without legal effect.

**Welfare right:** A claim asserted by an individual that requires a corresponding response, obligation, or duty on the part of others to provide some benefit.

**Zygote:** A fertilized oocyte formed by the fusion of egg and sperm, containing DNA from both.