

‘In five years, we will all be doing this’

Hope for fertility booster

By CLAIR WEAVER

A FERTILITY treatment that claims to help women fall pregnant more quickly and cheaply, without powerful doses of mood-altering hormones, is available for the first time in Australia.

Mild ovarian stimulation (MOS), which has the same success rate as conventional IVF, uses small doses of fertility drugs to release fewer, but higher quality, eggs.

Because fewer hormones are involved, women may avoid the painful side-effects and emotional roller-coasters associated with standard fertility treatment.

They do not need regular hormone injections and blood tests, just a single ultrasound check on the progress of their pregnancy.

David Knight, of Medica IVF, is the first Australian doctor to carry out the procedure, which he learned from British pioneer Professor Nick Macklon.

“We get the same number of babies, women get pregnant sooner, have fewer side-effects in the cycle and have a much less emotional response,” Dr Knight said. “And we do it without blood tests.”

Other doctors did not offer MOS because the medical fraternity was very conservative and would wait for more research, Dr Knight said.

“But I think that in five years, we’ll all be doing this.”

IVF Australia’s Michael Chapman defended conventional techniques, which he said had been developed over the past 30 years to maximise their chances of success.



Success story: Kim Potter, with son Brayden, is expecting an MOS baby *Picture: Angelo Sot*

“The truth is, 99 per cent of obstetricians in Australia use a really mild dose anyway,” Professor Chapman said.

Kim Potter, 35, used MOS and is 26 weeks pregnant with a baby boy. Her first child, Brayden, four, was conceived through conventional IVF.

“MOS was much better. The drugs were a lower dose, so I wasn’t as sick, and it was less stressful,” Ms Potter said.

TRADITIONAL

- Higher doses of hormones
- Releases more eggs
- \$6000 to \$9000 – out of pocket \$2000 to \$4000 after Medicare
- May experience abdominal pain and cramping, mood swings
- Break recommended between cycles

MILD OVARIAN

- Lower dose of hormones
- Releases fewer but higher-quality eggs
- \$6000 – out of pocket \$1800 after Medicare
- Same pregnancy rates as traditional IVF
- Fewer side-effects
- Cycles can be performed back-to-back

