

carenotes

UNDERSTANDING INFERTILITY

by Elizabeth Snowden, M.D.

Infertility is a very common problem affecting one in six couples in the United States. The rate of infertility increases as a couple gets older, with fertility decreasing significantly after age 35. If you and/or your spouse are over the age of 35 and have been attempting pregnancy for

6 months or longer with unprotected intercourse or if you and your spouse are younger than 35 and have been attempting pregnancy for 1 year or longer with unprotected intercourse, you may need assistance in achieving pregnancy. The physicians of Henderson and Walton Women's Center would be happy to discuss with you and your spouse any concerns you may have.

Almost 90% of all diagnosed cases of infertility can be traced to a specific cause and once the cause is known, many can be successfully treated with medications or surgical interventions.

In order to accurately pinpoint the reason for infertility, it is important to be evaluated so that the cause can be determined and if possible, treated so that the chances of pregnancy can be increased. Your Henderson and Walton Women's Center physician will obtain a complete medical and sexual history as well as perform a physical exam. If further treatment is recommended, your physician will refer you to our Infertility Department.

Fortunately, almost 90% of all diagnosed cases of infertility can be traced to a specific cause and once the cause is known, many can be successfully treated with medications or surgical interventions. Diagnosing infertility may include:

- A complete medical history of both the male and female

- Screening of a women's hormone levels
- Basal Body Temperature
- Ovulation Predictor tests
- Hysterosalpingogram- to evaluate Fallopian tubes and uterus
- Ultrasonography- to monitor maturation of follicles (egg sacs)
- Sims-Huhner (PCT)- to evaluate the ability of the sperm to penetrate the cervical mucus

There are many factors related to female infertility. They may include:

- Ovulatory dysfunction
- Hormone imbalances
- Infection
- Blocked or absent Fallopian tubes
- Scar tissue from previous surgeries/infections
- Endometriosis

Most female infertility can be treated. For women who do not ovulate regularly, there are medications that can help. Medications such as clomiphene citrate increase the output of hormones that are necessary for ovulation to occur and stimulate development of follicles. Other medications given in injection form such as gonadotropins also stimulate development of follicles in the ovaries. These medications can be given alone or in conjunction with each other. During these treatment therapies, a patient is monitored closely by labwork and ultrasonography. If the problem is anatomical, such as blocked Fallopian tubes, scar tissue, ovarian cysts, or endometriosis, there are surgical interventions that might address these problems.

Infertility is just as likely to be caused by male factor as by female factors. Some common causes of male infertility are:

- Poor sperm production or function
- Varicocele
- Obstruction of seminal tract
- Undescended testicle
- Ejaculation problems
- Hormonal abnormalities
- Infection

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A. Elizabeth Snowden, M.D.

Along with providing excellent medical care, Dr. Beth Snowden works hard to establish trusting patient relationships.

Communication is an integral part of the relationship and patients feel they can share more than just medical problems.

Originally from Abingdon, Virginia, Dr. Snowden graduated Magna Cum Laude from Emory & Henry College where she was a member of numerous honor societies. She received her M.D. from the Medical College of Virginia and completed her residency training at the University of Mississippi Medical Center in Jackson.

Dr. Snowden has presented lectures on such subjects as forceps delivery, twin gestation and RH ISO immunization. She has received top honors for her study on a special method for controlling pre-term labor.

THE PHYSICIANS OF HENDERSON & WALTON WOMEN'S CENTER, P.C.

Philip D. Walton, M.D.

Frank O. Page, M.D.

Charles Hudson, M.D.

Jeffrey Gunnells, M.D.

Carol G. Swindle, M.D.

Cynthia L. Lassiter, M.D.

Brenda C. Taylor, M.D.

A. Elizabeth Snowden, M.D.

John L. Edwards, M.D.

Cynthia L. Jones, M.D.

George H. McGrady, M.D.

Ernest G. Moore, M.D.

Charles H. Svensson, M.D.

Dan H. Hudson, M.D.

Lauren B. Britt, M.D.

Alison A. Heaton, M.D.

Kathleen Ingram, M.D.

**HENDERSON & WALTON
WOMEN'S CENTER, P.C.**



Cynthia L. Jones, M.D.

A native of Birmingham, Dr. Jones received her Bachelor of Arts degree from Auburn University. She then was awarded her Juris Doctorate from Rutgers University School of Law. After practicing law for two years, she went on to receive her Medical Degree from the University of Alabama at Birmingham School of Medicine.

Dr. Jones completed her internship and residency training at Carraway Methodist Medical Center where she served as Chief Resident of Obstetrics and Gynecology. During this time, she gained much experience performing laparoscopic hysterectomies. She is a member of the Jefferson County Medical Society.



Jeffrey Gunnells, M.D.

Dr. Gunnells brings specialized skills and a genuine commitment to the practice of medicine.

A native of Fort Worth, Texas, Dr. Gunnells grew up in Alabama and received his M.D. from the University of Alabama School of Medicine. He completed his residency training at the University of South Alabama Medical Center.

Dr. Gunnells is a member of the American Medical Association and is an active member and deacon of Dawson Baptist Church. He has combined his Christian life with his commitment to medicine by taking part in a volunteer program in Ghana, West Africa, where he treated patients and helped train physicians at two hospitals. He participated under the auspices of the Foreign Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention.

Dr. Gunnells and his wife, Melissa, have two sons, Drew and Taylor. In his spare time, he enjoys attending his children's baseball and soccer games, as well as hunting and spending time outdoors.

HWWC...OUTSIDE THE OFFICE

If you are watching a dog show sponsored by the American Kennel Club there is a chance you will spot a familiar face showing one of her prize-winning dogs. Dr. Cynthia Jones, one of Henderson & Walton's OBGYNs, travels all over the country showing her dogs with the American Kennel Club and the Cavalier King Charles Spaniel Club, USA.

In Dr. Jones' spare time she enjoys breeding and showing Cavalier King Charles Spaniels. Dr. Jones has won championships with five of her Cavaliers and has bred three champions on her own. She is currently showing her nine-month old female and will soon be showing two of her puppies that are now three months old.



The Cavalier King Charles Spaniel is a small breed that dates back to the early 1600's. This breed was primarily used as a house pet for the royal families of Europe and today 400 years since the Cavalier was first developed, it has become a very popular breed worldwide.

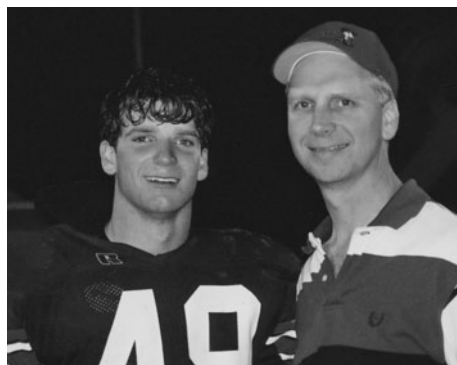
If you would like more information about the Cavalier King Charles Spaniel please visit the American Kennel Club website at www.akc.org.

HWWC...IN THE FAMILY

Henderson & Walton Women's Center is proud to highlight the academic and athletic achievements of Drew Gunnells son of Dr. and Mrs. Jeff Gunnells. He is a senior at Vestavia Hills High School where he maintains a 4.09 grade point average.

Drew is valued member of the varsity baseball and football teams and has received numerous awards including Birmingham News All Metro Football, Over-The-Mountain All Metro Football, and the All State Honorable Mention Football.

Academically, Drew has been named to Who's Who Among American High School Students and will be attending Clemson this fall. Drew is interested in studying pre-med and hopes to pursue a career in sports medicine.



When asked who has been a major influence on him Drew gives all the credit to his parents who he says, "have been the most influential people in my life. They are great Christian examples for me to follow. Whether it's in school, sports or life they have always been open and given me great insight into the decisions I have made."

KAIROS PRISON MINISTRY

by George McGrady, M.D.

For the past four years I have been involved in Kairos prison ministry. I have found this to be a life changing activity.

Kairos is a Greek word meaning "special time". Kairos is an international interdenominational prison ministry made up of clergy and lay men and women of all walks of life whose purpose is to establish Christian prayer and share groups within a prison population.

Kairos uses as its' model "Cursillo weekend" as known in the Catholic and Episcopal faiths or "Emmaus weekend" as it is known by many mainstream Protestant faiths.

A Kairos weekend occurs twice a year and usually numbers 55 to 65 men and women on a team. After eight weeks of weekly three-hour team building meetings, a Kairos team stages a four day retreat with a specific prison. I personally serve a maximum security prison in West Jefferson County named Donaldson Correctional Facility. In Alabama there are Kairos teams for prisons in Bibb, St. Clair, and Limestone counties.

Forty-two inmates are divided into seven individual table families that include one member of the clergy and three to four free lay persons. During the retreat, talks are presented and then there is a time for discussion and sharing among the table family members.

Food is prepared and brought in from the outside by the Kairos kitchen team. The wonderful food, music, and fellowship all go a long way to make the weekend a fruitful and enjoyable four days for all involved.

I had the privilege of serving as Rector of Kairos #38 held last October. Diane, my wife, served on the team and the experience was a high point for us last year. We are getting ready to serve on Kairos #39 to be held the week after Easter.

Prison ministry has allowed Diane and me to get to know and serve with some wonderful people. It allows us to give back to people who are so hungry for God's love. As with all ministries, when you serve God's people you always leave with many more blessings than you give.



George H. McGrady, M.D.

"It takes more than words of advice to be a good physician. While meeting the needs of patients is my top priority, I also advocate total personal health by setting a good example in my own approach to a healthy lifestyle."

Once a marathon runner, Dr. McGrady's current lifestyle includes daily running as part of his fitness program. He shows commitment to regular exercise, just as he does to his patients. Having practiced obstetrics and gynecology for over fourteen years, Dr. McGrady now devotes himself to the care of gynecological patients.

Dr. George McGrady grew up in Birmingham and graduated from Spring Hill College in Mobile. He went on to receive his Medical Doctorate from the University of Alabama at Birmingham where he also completed his residency training. He has a special interest in the area of pelvic reconstructive surgery.

SUSAN B. KOMAN RACE FOR THE CURE

In October 2003, associates from Henderson & Walton Women's Center, P.C. participated in the Susan B. Koman Race for the Cure. The experience of this event is one that we will not soon forget. We were all amazed at the number of people who have been personally touched by breast cancer or who were there to show their support for a loved one or in remembrance.

Those of us who participated walked in memory of a dear friend and co-worker, Kathy Chambers, who lost her battle with breast cancer in 2003. We also walked to celebrate the victory of several of our friends and coworkers who have beat this disease.

We encourage all of you to get your baseline mammogram at age 35 and to have annual screenings every year after age 40. Breast cancer is a treatable disease if caught in the earliest stages.

We would also like to invite you to participate with us at the 2004 Race for the Cure.



4-D ULTRASOUND

The 4-D ultrasound continues to be popular among our obstetrical patients. The clarity of the pictures gives moms and dads-to-be a unique opportunity to see their baby in ways never before imagined. The 4-D ultrasound is not used for diagnostic purposes, but for your enjoyment. If you are interested in having this particular scan please call 930-1800 and ask for our Test Scheduling area. The cost for this scan is \$125.00 and is not covered by your insurance.

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Males will be recommended to have a physical exam and semen evaluation by a urologist. Depending on the diagnosis, men can usually be treated with medication or surgical correction. In cases of decreased sperm counts, artificial insemination may be considered.

Some couples may need more advanced interventions requiring a referral to a reproductive endocrinologist. Your Henderson and Walton physician will be happy to guide you in making the best choice for your family's future.

SATELLITE LOCATIONS

Alabaster

Dr. Charles Hudson
Dr. Elizabeth Snowden

Anniston

Dr. Dan Hudson

Cullman

Dr. Cynthia Lassiter
Dr. Alison Heaton

Gadsden

Dr. Elizabeth Snowden
Dr. Jeffrey Gunnells
Dr. Lauren Britt

Jasper

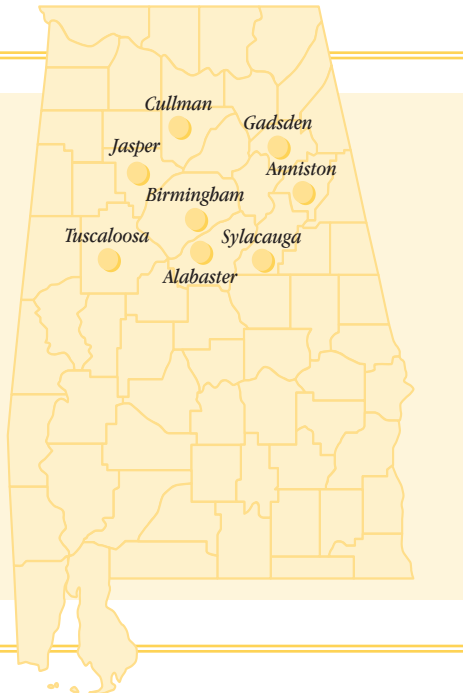
Dr. Carol Swindle
Dr. John Edwards

Sylacauga

Dr. Cynthia Jones
Dr. George McGrady

Tuscaloosa

Dr. Charles Svensson
Dr. Alison Heaton
Dr. Kathleen Ingram



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Saturday: 8:00 - 12:00

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HWWC - Anniston

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FAX: (256) 236-7575

HWWC - Cullman

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FAX: (256) 737-9307

HWWC - Gadsden

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FAX: (205) 221-4222

HWWC - Sylacauga

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HWWC - Tuscaloosa

Riverside Medical Center
535 Jack Warner Parkway, N.E.,
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