In-Vitro Fertilization

The In-Vitro Fertilization Unit

Soroka Medical Center
The Need

The In-Vitro Fertilization (IVF) Unit at Soroka Medical Center has made it possible for many young couples in Israel to realize their dream of having children and beginning a family. The Unit is among the most advanced in Israel, rating among the highest in Israeli Ministry of Health annual surveys and on par with the best medical centers in the western world.

There is a very real need to provide the Soroka Medical Center IVF Unit with the physical facilities and infrastructure that will provide a suitable setting for this world-class medical service and ensure its remaining on the cutting edge of fertility medicine into the foreseeable future.

The hope is also to triple the capacity of the IVF Unit in terms of number of treatments provided and patients served in order to meet both the need and the potential.

The Facility

The shell of the facility designated to serve as the future home of the In-Vitro Fertilization Unit at Soroka Medical Center is nearing completion. Funding is lacking to complete and name the facility.

The new IVF Unit will be located adjacent to the Operating Theaters and Ob-Gyn Emergency Room in the new Women's building at Soroka Medical Center. It will occupy an area of 620 sq meters (approx. 6670 sq ft), and will include examination and treatment rooms, ultrasound, laboratory, dedicated operating room and recovery area, as well as offices for physicians, nurses, and social workers.

Narrative

The In-Vitro Fertilization Unit at Soroka was established in 1987, building on the base and success of the Soroka Fertility Clinic which had been established a decade earlier. The current IVF Unit is located in cramped and inadequate rooms totaling 85 sq meters in the midst of the maternity wards. It is lacking appropriate dedicated spaces such as the needed operating room and recovery area.

The new IVF Unit will constitute a state-of-the-art facility to house all of the functions of this important family medical service. It will make possible the provision of even better medical treatment in more dignified surroundings where the women and men being treated will remain within the physical context of the Unit for examination, treatment, and recovery.

In-Vitro-Fertilization is a medical/surgical process aimed at solving infertility disorders. Treatment involves three principle stages: ovarian stimulation to increase the number of eggs, egg retrieval and fertilization using sperm in a lab environment, and transfer of embryo into the uterus which will hopefully result in successful pregnancy and delivery of a normal baby. The success rate of the IVF Unit at Soroka Medical Center is consistently above the national average.

As clearly seen in the table below, Soroka surpasses all the national IVF indices despite being a public unit serving the whole population of the Negev and thus having to cope with language, culture and communication difficulties arising from the nature of the populations residing in its jurisdiction. This makes the great success of Soroka's IVF Unit even more impressive.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject (%)</th>
<th>Soroka</th>
<th>Nationally</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>pregnancies from treatment cycles</td>
<td>32.8</td>
<td>25.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pregnancies from treatment, with embryo transfer</td>
<td>36.7</td>
<td>28.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>live births from treatment cycles</td>
<td>24.3</td>
<td>16.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>live births from treatment cycles, with embryo transfer</td>
<td>27.2</td>
<td>19.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>live births from pregnancies</td>
<td>74.0</td>
<td>66.4</td>
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</table>

A unique aspect of the IVF Unit at Soroka is its approach to and treatment of the infertile couple, both male and female. The new IVF Unit will provide additional medical/surgical services, such as freezing eggs, pre-implantation genetic diagnosis, and in vitro maturation of oocytes (eggs before maturation), in addition to services it already provides such as the freezing of sperm for oncology patients.
The sole exception in the pattern of Soroka’s IVF Unit exceeding national statistics is the number of treatment cycles. The average in Israel is 1,500 treatment cycles per 100,000 females of relevant age, whereas at Soroka the figure stands at 500 cycles. The reason behind this gap is very simply the lack of space and proper conditions, including the shortage of workstations in the IVF lab and other critical infrastructure and equipment. It is precisely in this regard that the latent potential can be realized.

The new facility will allow the expansion of the services provided to additional couples and be instrumental in meeting current and future demand, tripling the number of patients served. In the new facility, the medical staff of the IVF Unit, which currently includes three expert physicians, three embryologists, and two nurses, will also be expanded to meet the increased level of treatments.

Also included in the broader fertility services provided by Soroka Medical Center are the Fertility Clinic, with more than 4,000 patient visits per year, and the Male Fertility Laboratory, with more than 1,200 patient visits per year. Soroka’s total fertility services provide care to the entire Negev, including members of all Israeli HMOs as well as Israel Defense Force personnel.

Prof. Eitan Lunenfeld, Head of the IVF Unit, holds the Dr. Mory Gelfand Chair in Obstetrics and Gynecology at Ben Gurion University and currently serves as Chair of the Israeli Fertility Society as well.

The Soroka IVF unit is very much involved in both basic and applied research. Physicians in the unit have received many national and international research grants and also participate in significant international multi-center studies. For example, in the area of clinical research, the IVF Unit has recently published in an international scientific journal a breakthrough in the technique of embryo transfer. In the area of basic research, the IVF Unit together with the Department of Immunology and Microbiology at Ben-Gurion University’s Faculty of Health Sciences has recently published etiologies for male infertility and concomitant therapeutic strategies.

Costs

* Completion of construction including existing shell: $1,800,000
  - All internal construction and finish
  - Sanitation, electricity, air conditioning, and development permanent fixtures
  - Planning, supervision and management
  - Miscellaneous, unanticipated, and currency rate fluctuations
  - Value Added Tax (VAT)

* Medical equipment and furnishings: $500,000
  - This will include the acquisition of medical equipment for the following functions:
    - Examination rooms
    - Laboratories
    - Operating room
    - Recovery room

Total project cost: $2,300,000

Donation and Donor Recognition

A donation of $1,500,000 is requested to complete, equip, and name the In-Vitro Fertilization Unit at Soroka Medical Center. Full and prominent donor recognition will be provided at both the IVF Unit itself and on the Donors’ Wall of Honor at Soroka Medical Center, in addition to a dignified public dedication and naming ceremony.
Soroka Medical Center is among Israel’s largest and most advanced hospitals, and the country’s most active. Soroka is the only major medical center in the entire Negev, serving a population of one million inhabitants, including 400,000 children, in a region that accounts for 60% of the country’s total land area. Soroka serves as the teaching hospital of the Ben-Gurion University Medical School, whose Faculty of Health Sciences is located on the hospital campus.

On par with leading international institutions, Soroka is a recognized specialist in areas including early detection and treatment of breast cancer using minimally invasive procedures; revolutionary treatment of myocardial infarction involving genetic engineering; non-invasive removal of malignant tumors; trauma rehabilitation of children and adolescents; pediatric infectious diseases; and much more.

Each year, Soroka cares for more than 190,000 emergency cases, 80,000 hospitalizations fill its 1,000 beds, over 32,000 surgical procedures are performed, and more than 13,000 babies are born. Its neonatal and pediatric departments provide family-centered intensive care with world-class survival rates.

Soroka’s Trauma Unit is the largest and busiest in Israel, always on call, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Soroka serves as the regional trauma center for victims of terror and for all Israel Defense Force bases in and near the Negev. More than 3,000 trauma patients are admitted to Soroka annually.

Soroka’s physicians travel in mobile units to care for patients in remote clinics as part of Soroka’s community outreach programs. Soroka educates the Negev’s diverse population in preventive care and public health. Soroka is also the largest employer in the Negev, with more than 4,000 employees, including more than 800 new immigrants on staff at all levels of responsibility.

Soroka Medical Center stands at the forefront of medical progress, and is currently undergoing a period of expanded development, upgrading and enhancing research capabilities and the healthcare it provides. Soroka’s staff is dedicated to advancing research and to providing the best medical and emergency care, while treating the patient as a whole human being.

Soroka Medical Center combines medical excellence, dedication, and the achievements of pioneering Israel, with significant opportunities to partner in meeting very immediate needs and having a very real impact on the lives of families and children.

We greatly appreciate your consideration of supporting and partnering with Soroka Medical Center in this excellent and needed medical service, bringing hope and blessing to young Israeli families.
American Friends of Soroka Medical Center
P.O Box 184-H  Scarsdale, NY 10583
Tel: 914-725-9070
Fax: 914-725-9073
email: americanfriends@soroka.org
website: www.soroka.org

Soroka Medical Center
POB 151, Beer-Sheva,
84101 Israel
Tel: 972-8-640-3963
Fax: 972-8-640-3901
email: iritbibi@clalit.org.il
website: www.soroka.co.il

המרכז הרפואי האוניברסיטאי סורוקה
ת.ד. 151 באר שבע 84101
טל: 08-640-3963
פקס: 08-640-3901
email: iritbibi@clalit.org.il
אתר: www.soroka.co.il