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Undergraduate Certificate in Surrogacy Parenting

## Medical Procedures in Surrogacy

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### Medical Procedures in Surrogacy

Surrogacy is a process where a woman carries a baby for another person or couple. It involves various medical procedures to ensure the successful conception, pregnancy, and delivery of the baby. In this course, we will explore the key terms and vocabulary related to medical procedures in surrogacy.

#### In Vitro Fertilization (IVF)

In vitro fertilization (IVF) is a common assisted reproductive technology (ART) procedure used in surrogacy. It involves the fertilization of an egg with sperm outside the body in a laboratory dish. The resulting embryo is then transferred to the surrogate's uterus for implantation and pregnancy.

IVF is often used in cases where the intended parent(s) are unable to conceive naturally due to fertility issues. It allows for the creation of embryos using the genetic material of the intended parents or donors, which can then be transferred to the surrogate for gestation.

#### Egg Retrieval

Egg retrieval is a procedure in which eggs are collected from the ovaries of the intended mother or an egg donor for use in IVF. The eggs are retrieved using a needle guided by ultrasound, usually under sedation or anesthesia. The retrieved eggs are then fertilized with sperm to create embryos for transfer to the surrogate's uterus.

Egg retrieval is a crucial step in the IVF process and requires careful monitoring and coordination to ensure the successful collection of viable eggs for fertilization.

#### Sperm Retrieval

Sperm retrieval is a procedure used to collect sperm from the intended father or a sperm donor for use in IVF. There are various methods of sperm retrieval, including ejaculation, surgical extraction from the testicles or epididymis, and sperm aspiration.

Sperm retrieval is necessary in cases where the intended father is unable to produce sperm naturally or has a low sperm count. The collected sperm is then used to fertilize the retrieved eggs for embryo creation and transfer to the surrogate.

#### Embryo Transfer

Embryo transfer is the process of placing one or more embryos into the uterus of the surrogate for implantation and pregnancy. The embryos are typically transferred using a thin catheter inserted through the cervix into the uterus, guided by ultrasound.

Embryo transfer is a delicate procedure that requires careful timing and coordination to maximize the chances of successful implantation and pregnancy. The number of embryos transferred is usually determined based on factors such as the age of the intended parent(s) and the quality of the embryos.

### Surrogate Screening

Surrogate screening is a comprehensive evaluation of the surrogate's physical, emotional, and psychological health to ensure her suitability for surrogacy. The screening process typically includes medical tests, psychological assessments, and background checks to assess the surrogate's overall health and readiness for pregnancy.

Surrogate screening helps to minimize the risks associated with surrogacy and ensures that the surrogate is capable of carrying a healthy pregnancy to term. It also helps to establish a strong foundation for the surrogacy arrangement and build trust between the intended parent(s) and the surrogate.

### Medical Monitoring

Medical monitoring involves regular check-ups and assessments of the surrogate's health throughout the surrogacy process. The surrogate is closely monitored by medical professionals to ensure the well-being of both the surrogate and the developing baby.

Medical monitoring includes frequent ultrasounds, blood tests, and physical exams to track the progress of the pregnancy and address any potential complications or concerns. It plays a crucial role in ensuring a successful surrogacy journey and a healthy outcome for all parties involved.

### Legal Agreements

Legal agreements are formal contracts that outline the rights, responsibilities, and obligations of the intended parent(s) and the surrogate in a surrogacy arrangement. These agreements cover various aspects of the surrogacy process, including financial arrangements, parental rights, and dispute resolution.

Legal agreements are essential in surrogacy to protect the interests of all parties involved and establish clear guidelines for the surrogacy journey. They help to prevent misunderstandings or conflicts and provide a legal framework for the surrogacy arrangement.

### Pre-Implantation Genetic Testing (PGT)

Pre-implantation genetic testing (PGT) is a procedure used to screen embryos for genetic disorders or chromosomal abnormalities before transfer to the surrogate's uterus. PGT helps to identify healthy embryos

with the highest chances of successful implantation and pregnancy.

There are different types of PGT, including PGT-A (aneuploidy screening), PGT-M (monogenic disorder screening), and PGT-SR (structural rearrangement screening). These tests can help to reduce the risk of genetic conditions in the baby and increase the likelihood of a successful pregnancy in surrogacy.

### Maternal-Fetal Medicine

Maternal-fetal medicine is a specialized branch of obstetrics that focuses on managing high-risk pregnancies and complications related to the health of the mother and baby. In surrogacy, maternal-fetal medicine specialists play a crucial role in monitoring the surrogate's pregnancy and addressing any medical concerns that may arise.

Maternal-fetal medicine specialists work closely with the surrogate, the intended parent(s), and other healthcare providers to ensure the well-being of both the surrogate and the developing baby. They provide expert care and guidance throughout the surrogacy journey to optimize the chances of a successful pregnancy and delivery.

### Neonatal Care

Neonatal care involves the medical management of newborn babies, especially those born prematurely or with health issues. In surrogacy, neonatal care may be required if the baby is born early or experiences complications during delivery.

Neonatal care providers, such as neonatologists and neonatal nurses, specialize in caring for newborns in intensive care units (NICUs) and providing the necessary medical support and interventions. They play a crucial role in ensuring the health and well-being of babies born through surrogacy and supporting their transition to home care.

### Challenges and Considerations

While medical procedures in surrogacy offer hope and opportunities for intended parent(s) to build their families, they also present challenges and considerations that require careful planning and management. Some of the key challenges and considerations include:

- Emotional and psychological impact: Surrogacy involves complex emotional dynamics for all parties involved, including the surrogate, intended parent(s), and the baby. It is essential to provide adequate support and counseling to address the emotional challenges that may arise during the surrogacy journey.
- Legal complexities: Surrogacy laws and regulations vary by country and state, leading to legal complexities that can impact the surrogacy process. It is crucial to work with experienced legal professionals to navigate the legal landscape and ensure compliance with relevant laws and guidelines.

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- Medical risks and complications: Surrogacy carries inherent medical risks and complications, such as multiple pregnancies, preterm birth, and pregnancy-related complications. It is essential to work with qualified healthcare providers and specialists to monitor and address these risks throughout the surrogacy journey.

- Financial considerations: Surrogacy can be a costly process, involving expenses for medical procedures, legal fees, and compensation for the surrogate. It is important to establish a clear financial plan and budget to cover the costs of surrogacy and ensure financial stability for all parties involved.

In conclusion, medical procedures in surrogacy play a crucial role in facilitating the conception, pregnancy, and delivery of babies for intended parent(s) who are unable to conceive naturally. By understanding the key terms and vocabulary related to medical procedures in surrogacy, participants in the Undergraduate Certificate in Surrogacy Parenting course can gain a comprehensive understanding of the surrogacy process and the importance of medical care and support in achieving successful outcomes.