



# FERTILITY FACT SHEET

San Ramon / Orinda / San Jose

## ASSISTED HATCHING

For IVF to be successful a number of events must occur. Perhaps one of the most critical events is the process of Embryo implantation. When embryos are replaced into the woman's uterus they are covered by an outer coating, the zona pellucida. This outer coating must dissolve for the embryo to be able to "hatch" and begin its physical contact with the Endometrium. If there is failure of the embryo to "hatch" implantation may not occur.

Assisted Hatching uses a physical or chemical treatment on the zona pellucida to allow the embryo to "hatch" more easily, thereby improving the opportunity for implantation and pregnancy. At RSC we use an extremely precise laser for this procedure. This safe and accurate method is performed just prior to the Embryo transfer.

There is accumulating scientific evidence that Assisted Hatching may improve the chances of pregnancy in certain situations. Women who may obtain benefit from assisted hatching include:

1. Women older than 37
2. Women with elevated FSH levels or reduced levels of AMH
3. Women who have failed to achieve a pregnancy in prior IVF cycles
4. Patients undergoing frozen embryo transfer

There is currently no evidence that Assisted Hatching harms the Embryo or increases the risk of birth defects.

It has been observed that the risk of identical twinning (Monozygotic twins) is increased in pregnancies associated with the use of Assisted Hatching. However, the rate still remains low.