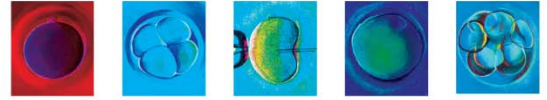


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FERTILITY FACT SHEET

San Ramon / Orinda / San Jose

RH STATUS & RH IMMUNOGLOBULIN (RHO GAM)

Before starting fertility treatments at RSC we require women undergo multiple blood tests. One of these tests determines blood type and Rh factor. Rh (Rhesus) factor is a protein that most people have on the surface of their red blood cells. If you have the Rh factor you have an Rh positive blood type. Statistically 85% of Caucasians, 90-95% of African Americans, and 98-99% of Asian Americans are Rh positive. If you do not have the protein you are Rh negative and will need to take certain precautions during and after any pregnancy or pregnancy loss.

If a woman is Rh negative and her partner is Rh positive, it is possible that the woman and her fetus have different blood types (the fetus could be Rh positive). Generally, if a partner's blood type is not known it is assumed that it is Rh positive. Being Rh incompatible is not likely to harm you or the fetus during your first pregnancy. However, during birth or pregnancy loss fetal blood can mix with your blood. Your immune system recognizes the Rh protein as foreign and starts to produce antibodies against the Rh positive blood. If you become pregnant in the future with an Rh positive fetus, your antibodies may attack the blood cells of the new fetus.

To avoid becoming "RH sensitized" women that are Rh negative must have an injection of a medication called Rh immunoglobulin (RhoGAM) whenever there is a chance that your blood has been exposed to Rh positive fetal blood. This medication actually consists of a small dose of antibodies that serve to neutralize the Rh positive blood cells before they prompt your immune system to develop antibodies. This is called passive immunization. For this medication to work effectively it needs to be administered within 72 hours of any potential exposure to fetal blood at birth or during a pregnancy loss. The medication is administered intramuscularly. There are few side effects with the most common being soreness at the injection site and a slight fever afterwards.