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IVF Experts call for early implementation of ART Laws

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Given mindless utilisation of infertility treatments and discard of age factors, fertility experts strongly recommend urgent revisit on Assisted Reproductive Technology (ART) Bill 2017 by the government to properly regulate and monitor it in the country.

Recently a 74-years old woman delivered twins and that alerted the fertility fraternity. As per the Bill —the reproductive technology services shall not be available to a woman below the age of 18 years and above the age of 45 years.

Dr Archana Dhawan Bajaj, Gynecologist, Obstetrician and IVF Expert, Nurture IVF Centre said, “The government needs urgently to revisit the Bill. Due to a lack of strict regulation through ART laws, we are witnessing a surge in unethical practices and rampant commercialisation of IVF. As an IVF expert, I also strongly recommend that the ART should not be made available to women below the age of 18 and above the age of 45.”

It is a proven fact that women are most fertile between the ages of 15 and 30.

“IVF at advanced ages come with risks of pregnancy loss, fetal anomalies, stillbirth, and obstetric complications. It is also associated with medical comorbidities in mother due to increasing maternal age like hypertension, diabetes and heart problem. It poses risks to both mother and child,” Dr Archana added.

The Indian Fertility Society (IFS) has also condemned the mindless misutilization of IVF technologies.

Appealing all its members and health professionals to abstain from such unethical malpractice which may risk the lives of the patients, offsprings and future generation, Dr. Pankaj Talwar, Secretary General IFS, said, “We, as reproductive health professionals, have a great responsibility towards society and couples. The ART should not be made available to women below the age of 18 and above the age of 45.”

In India, currently, there is no prohibition on the ART above 45 years of age or below 18 years.

Dr. Anoop Gupta from Delhi IVF Fertility Research Centre said, “The Assisted Reproductive Technology (ART) has come as a boon for infertility treatment. However, this needs to utilise ethically and we need to keep both the health and social aspects of the patient in mind. I strongly recommend that the ART should be available to a woman above the age of eighteen years and below the age of forty-five years.”

The Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) has been making efforts to put in place regulations and had drafted the ART Bill. Fertility experts expect that now ICMR would take urgent action to once again re-introduce the Bill in Parliament.