

## HEALTH

# Many Clinics Use Genetic Diagnosis to Choose Sex

### PART 1

Needle – procedure – gender – survey – beyond – surgical – womb – pregnancies – embryos – outside

MICHELE NORRIS, host:

From NPR News, this is ALL THINGS CONSIDERED. I'm Michele Norris.

And we continue now with our examination of pre-natal genetic testing. A growing number of doctors are pushing the ethical limits of the \_\_\_\_\_ called pre-implantation genetic diagnosis, or PGD.

Some say doctors are going \_\_\_\_\_ the edge of ethics. Some doctors analyze an embryo's DNA so parents can choose to have a male or female placed in the \_\_\_\_\_. Last year, a \_\_\_\_\_ found that one of every 11 PGDs was for gender selection alone. That study, by Johns Hopkins University, also found that 42 percent of clinics offering PGD offer it for \_\_\_\_\_ selection.

Lonny Shavelson reports.

LONNY SHAVELSON: At the Huntington Reproductive Center in Southern California, reproductive specialist Dr. Daniel Potter sits in front of a 32-year-old, anesthetized woman covered in \_\_\_\_\_ drapes.

Dr. DANIEL POTTER (Huntington Reproductive Center): And you can this \_\_\_\_\_ is fairly impressive.

SHAVELSON: He's extracting her eggs to be fertilized \_\_\_\_\_ her body, although she's capable of having a baby by natural means. She's asked him to analyze the chromosomes of her \_\_\_\_\_ and select only the males.

Dr. POTTER: Virtually 100 percent of those \_\_\_\_\_ will be the desired gender.

### PART 2

Conceived – eggs – shouldn't – arranged – inherit – appreciate – unless – guarantee – financially – out

SHAVELSON: The American Society of Reproduction Medicine says PGD should be used only when there's a risk of genetic diseases, not just to select gender. Dr. Potter says he's fulfilling his patients' reproductive rights.

Dr. POTTER: It's presumptuous of any organization to try to assert that a woman should or \_\_\_\_\_ be able to determine the number of children she wants to have or the gender of these children.

SHAVELSON: In his afternoon clinic, Dr. Potter greets a couple originally from India.

Dr. POTTER: Today we're going to know more about how many \_\_\_\_\_ you're going to have.

SHAVELSON: The couple had an \_\_\_\_\_ marriage 15 years ago and have settled in British Columbia, where they've had two daughters \_\_\_\_\_ naturally. They've traveled here, staying in a hotel a few blocks from Disneyland while working with Dr. Potter to \_\_\_\_\_ their next child is a boy. The couple, who do business in the Indian community, say they'd be \_\_\_\_\_ ostracized if they used their names.

The husband says he wants a son to \_\_\_\_\_ their business. The wife says there'll be no one to care for them in their old age \_\_\_\_\_ they have a son.

Unidentified Woman: Girls get married, and they move \_\_\_\_\_, right? And with a boy, they will stay with us.

Unidentified Man: I really \_\_\_\_\_ that she's doing so much to get a son in the family.

### PART 3

**Desirable – significant – scientific – foreign – for – discrimination – responsible – from – consciousness – relationship – to – up – stereotypes - down**

SHAVELSON: Sujatha Jasudussin(ph) is Indian-American and the program director at the Center for Genetics and Society in Oakland, a public affairs group that says it wants \_\_\_\_\_ use of genetic technology. She says sex selection is sex \_\_\_\_\_.

Ms. SUJATHA JASUDUSSIN (Center for Genetics and Society): There is a whole tone in the culture that says girls are just not as \_\_\_\_\_.

SHAVELSON: Twenty-five percent of the patients who come to Dr. Potter for gender selection are \_\_\_\_\_ born. Of those from India, Korea and China, he says 90 percent ask him for boys. That adds up to six boys a month in just his clinic, and while there have been no \_\_\_\_\_ reports on which sex is chosen in all PGD clinics, one study found that while most patients doing IVF would select boys or girls equally, there was a \_\_\_\_\_ preference for girls. Dr. Potter says that of his American born patients, 80 percent ask \_\_\_\_\_ girls, and they tell him why.

Dr. POTTER: It's about the woman desiring to have the \_\_\_\_\_ that she had with her mother, seeing their daughter walk \_\_\_\_\_ the aisle, going shopping with them. This potential daughter occupies a space in their consciousness just like a living human being, and for them to give \_\_\_\_\_ on that, it's like a death.

SHAVELSON: Whether parents want a boy or a girl because of gender \_\_\_\_\_, ethnic traditions or simply because they have one sex and want the other, it's the intensity of that desire that's motivated doctors in many PGD clinics to take it \_\_\_\_\_ a procedure designed \_\_\_\_\_ detect genetic defects to one that selects boys or girls.

For NPR News, I'm Lonny Shavelson.

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