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Infertility Breakthrough

"A miracle pill made me a mom!"

Lynette Barnes desperately wanted to be a mom. But after surgeries, artificial inseminations and two rounds of in vitro, she still didn't have a baby. It would take a miracle for her to get pregnant. Or a miracle pill . . .

As her doctor spoke, Lynette Barnes fought back tears. She'd suffered through post-procedure office visits before, the kind where you talk about next time.

But this time was different. Because this time, although the fertility specialist said she *could* try in vitro again . . .

"The odds of it working are very low," he admitted.

And after four years and almost a dozen failed procedures, she had to agree: Another round would bring more heartache.

But how could she give up?

Don't expect a baby right away, Lynette had told herself when she and her husband, Tim, decided to start a family.

Still, when a whole year passed with no happy news to share, the worried Sheridan, Wyoming, couple saw a doctor.

Initial tests were hopeful: Their hormone levels were normal, Tim's sperm count was good and 32-year-old Lynette was ovulating.

But several months later, with no baby on the way, her doctor did a full fertility workup and discovered one of Lynette's Fallopian tubes was blocked. Surgery revealed she also had endometriosis, polyps and a fibroid cyst that needed to be removed.

How could I have so many problems and not have had some sign? Lynette reeled.

The doctor was surprised, too, but the important thing was now that they were fixed, I'll finally get pregnant! she thought.

But another year passed with no joyful announcement.

"I think we need help," Lynette told Tim.

Hoping for a medical miracle

Lynette started taking Clomid to stimulate egg production and regulate ovulation. And when the timing was right, they tried artificial insemination.

Please let this work, Lynette prayed.

But it didn't.

Lynette was heartbroken. And so was Tim. But even though the drugs triggered mood swings, crying jags and angry outbursts—even though the disappointment was overwhelming—they wanted to try again.

And again. And again. Seven times in all, until the emotional—and financial—toll grew too high. "I'm done," Lynette wept.

But something whispered: *Get a second opinion.* And her new doctor advised: "In vitro."



"Everything we went through was worth it to have Hannah!" says Lynette.

Mixing the eggs and sperm in the lab will increase the odds of fertilization, she explained.

So Lynette took more drugs—this time by injection. There were daily blood tests. Then egg retrieval and, finally, two embryos—two possible miracles—were transferred. But neither implanted.

In vitro often doesn't work the first time, Lynette told herself. If I don't try again, I'll always wonder.

But a second attempt failed, too. And with each failure, the odds of in vitro working fell. Until they were so low, there was no use trying.

There was no way she could go through another procedure. But being a mom was all she'd ever dreamed of.

They knew adoption was an option, one they were considering. Still, Lynette couldn't help asking: "Isn't there *anything* else?"

To her surprise . . .

A magic pill

There is something," the doctor said. She'd just read a study by Stanford University School of Medicine that proved a new all-natural supplement could significantly enhance fertility.

The women's formula contained chasteberry, an herb proven to promote hormone balance and ovulation; the amino acid L-arginine, which improves circulation to the reproductive area; and other reproductive-health-boosting nutrients, including green tea, vitamin E and selenium.

"All good for you and safe," the doctor said.

"I'll try it!" Lynette said.

And though he didn't have problems, Tim decided to take the men's formula. "The more help, the better," he said.

Don't get your hopes up, Lynette cautioned herself as she swallowed her pill each morning.

And when, after only two months, she started feeling queasy and her breasts hurt, she feared it was just wishful thinking.

So she didn't tell Tim when she took a home pregnancy test.

And even when she saw the plus sign, even though her heart nearly burst out of her chest, she thought: It could be a mistake.

Only after three blood tests to be absolutely sure did Lynette give Tim a card that read, *What are you doing November 11?*

"Why?" he puzzled.

"Because that's the day we're having a baby!" she beamed.

"The pills worked!" he said, stunned.

Baby Hannah turned out to be just as anxious for a family as her mom and dad, because she arrived two months early. But after a few weeks in the neonatal intensive-care unit . . .

"Welcome home!" Lynette choked, tucking Hannah into her crib.

Today, Hannah is eight months old, and Lynette still gets teary-eyed looking at her.

"After all the fancy medical treatments, I can't believe a little pill made me a mom," Lynette says. "For us, it was a miracle pill!"

—Kathy Fitzpatrick

More natural ways to enhance your fertility!

Lynette used Fertility Blend for Women (\$29.99 for a one-month supply, FertilityBlend.com), but these tips can also help you conceive:

● Reach a healthy weight!

Weighing too much or too little can inhibit ovulation, says Hope Ricciotti, M.D., reproductive health expert at BeWell.com.

● Consider this kit!

"Frequently taking your temperature to identify your most fertile days can cause stress," says Dr. Ricciotti. "An ovulation predictor like ClearBlue Easy can detect your two best days to conceive."

● Track your periods!

Many women don't keep track of their menstrual cycle, but this information is critical for predicting when you ovulate.

● Meditate!

Stress wreaks havoc on hormones. "Doing a mini-meditation every day is the best way to control your stress response," says Dr. Ricciotti.

