

# Baby Steps

Reinventive Fertility founders Sandra Ustaris, DPT, NPT and Leanne Skinner, MPT, NPT offer a helping hand to women on their pregnancy journey.

BY RESIDENT GEORGIA JACOBS

**GREET: Tell us a little about yourselves and how you came together to start Reinventive Fertility.**

**SANDRA USTARIS AND LEANNE SKINNER:**

We came together because we both saw the need for women to have more positive options for fertility that incorporate a holistic mind-body approach to health. As women, who both conceived in our late 30s, we were constantly living in the shadow of a negative fertility prognosis, and were faced with limited options for treatments. As healthcare practitioners, we knew that medically assisted procedures were really only treating one aspect of infertility. There are so many more factors that go into optimizing fertility health that are rarely addressed.

**What is the ultimate mission of Reinventive Fertility and who is an ideal candidate for your services?**

Our mission at Reinventive Fertility is to empower women to have more control in their fertility journey, to give them tools to improve their health, and be successful with natural conception or with IVF/IUI treatments. We strive to be an integral resource for women going through fertility struggles by showing them to trust in their body's ability to conceive holistically, and to have an uplifting positive experience. Our ideal client is a woman who has been trying to conceive unsuccessfully for over six months, is typically in her mid-late 30s, and is looking to increase her chances of conception either naturally or in conjunction with IVF cycles.



**What are the five pillars of fertility?**

When trying to conceive, we believe in a few fundamental practices to improve success that we call, The Five Pillars of Fertility. No. 1 - Obtain proper bloodwork: Blood work can be a good marker for what is causing fertility challenges. No. 2 - Properly track your ovulation. No. 3 - Rethink how you are eating: Restrictive dieting may deprive your body of essential nutrients necessary for conception and can cause hormone imbalances. No. 4 - Consider taking supplements to support your body's natural reproductive system. No. 5 - Be consistent with a positive mindset.

**Describe some of your most important services.**

Our most important service is called Mercier Therapy and is a manual technique that is used to optimize blood flow to the reproductive system, decrease scar tissue from previous C-sections/miscarriages or surgeries, and encourage proper alignment of the uterus. This program is combined with natural supplements, cycle syncing meal plans, transcutaneous electric stimulation, and lifestyle modification for environmental toxin elimination. Mercier Therapy has been shown to be 83% effective in conception within one year of starting the program.

**How long does a typical program take?**

The program is six consecutive weekly sessions. We also offer an intensive and abbreviated program that can be condensed to six consecutive days for those traveling from out of town or who would like to take advantage of the program prior to a medically assisted cycle.

**What about the emotional aspects of infertility? Do you address those? How?**

The emotional aspects of infertility are very impactful to a woman’s journey and can be considered “the secret struggle,” mostly because women do not have others to open up to. Emotional struggles encompass relationship issues with a partner, anxiety, depression, and inadequacy. As mind-body practitioners, we also help identify and address limiting beliefs inhibiting fertility health while providing tools to navigate emotions, stress, and the uncertainty of the future. We feel this is something that is not addressed in other fertility clinics and women need this kind of ongoing support.

**What are some of the major causes of infertility?**

Major causes of infertility are PCOS, endometriosis, decreased egg quality, and hormonal imbalances. We have the ability to improve our cellular health (egg quality) and balance our hormones with lifestyle changes by reducing stress, eliminating environmental toxins, and choosing proper nutrition.

**Could you share a memorable success story?**

Our most memorable success story came from a 43-year-old woman who was trying to conceive for over a year. Her partner had a reverse vasectomy, they had gone through three IVF cycles which all failed. She also had a history of two miscarriages and three chemical pregnancies. Her journey was long and she was feeling defeated. We knew it was a difficult case, but never had a doubt that we could boost her fertility health and improve her mindset to trust her body. We started working with her in April and she was pregnant

three months later! This was the most memorable for us because we were able to see a woman who thought she was defeated, finally experience the amazing gift of motherhood, something she never thought would happen.

**When should a woman who is planning to conceive begin addressing fertility?**

Any woman who is considering having a baby should start as soon as possible to address fertility. It takes 90-120 days for an egg to develop for ovulation, so the lifestyle changes you make now will impact your eggs three to four months from now.

**Anything else you’d like to add?**

Our biggest pet peeve is when clients are told they will not get pregnant by their physician. Our bodies do amazing things, it just needs a little trust and TLC sometimes. We are happily taking new clients in West Chester, and have created a virtual fertility program for those who cannot see us in person. We are passionate about all things fertility, and love talking about it on our podcast: The Fertility Happy Hour.

*For more information on Reinventive Fertility, see @Reinventivefertility on Instagram or reinventivefertility.com.*

