

The Need for Counseling Surrogate Mothers before Practicing Surrogacy

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Abstract

Introduction: Practicing surrogacy without proper consultations with the two concerned parties, may poses surrogate mothers to psychological and behavioral problems during pregnancy, delivery, and postpartum. This study aims to underline possible risks and problems faced by surrogate mothers and it tries to take care of them by persuading to hold decent preliminary consultations.

Materials and Methods: This paper reviews the published literatures during 1987 - 2008, and it covers domestic resources as well as foreign ones and focuses mainly on legal and cultural issues surrounding surrogacy and surrogate motherhood.

Results: The reviews showed that the physicians or the counselors should explain the ethical and legal issues and medical risks related to surrogacy, as well as disclose benefits from this act to both parties during counseling sessions. Possible referral of both parties for mental health consultation must be available before surrogacy process is started. The potential surrogate mothers should understand the importance of a written agreement consisting of terms, preconditions and possible future incidents.

Conclusion: It seems that consultation and clarification of probable contingencies faced during the surrogacy process greatly help surrogate mothers experience the period with an altruistic feeling to help the intended couples. Organizing a consulting team composed of clinicians and health experts with various expertise is recommended to cover all dimensions of surrogacy including its medical, psychological, religious, legal, and social aspects.

Key Words: Conventional surrogacy, Gestational surrogacy, Infertile couple, Legal counseling, Medical counseling, Mental counseling, Surrogacy, Surrogate mother.

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