



*The Infertility Support Network (TISN) Trust*

*The long walk to parenthood*

*Non-Profit Organization Number 069-682*

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## **WORD FROM THE FOUNDERS**

We thank God in this issue for our 2<sup>nd</sup> birthday. During the past 2 years, we have seen The Infertility Support Network (TISN) grow in leaps and bounds across the borders of Gauteng, South Africa to an international level and reach individuals and couples that are challenged in the area of infertility, with much needed support. We are grateful to God for long awaited pregnancies and bundles of joy with Kimbal, Stephanie, Robynne, Purdey, Mampho and Darlene. We continue to trust God for breakthroughs in the lives of others that walk patiently on the long road to parenthood.

In this issue we tackle the sensitive subject of donating eggs or sperm to enable an infertile couple to experience the joy of raising a child ... what does it mean from an ethical and biological point of view? We encourage you to take one day at a time and invite the presence of God into every minute of your day. God's ways are mysterious and differ significantly from ours ... of one thing we can be sure – He has our best interests at heart as His children!



Derrick and Krishnee Kissoonduth



LONDON: A black couple have amazed medical experts after their baby was born with white skin, blue eyes and blonde hair.

Benjamin and Angela Ihegboro's daughter, Nmachi, has baffled genetic experts who cannot explain her looks. Doctors say the white-skinned newborn is not an albino.

The British couple are both of Igbo Nigerian origin and have dark skin.

Father Ben Ihegboro, 44, admitted that when he saw the baby he exclaimed: "What the flip!" before joking: "Is she mine?"

Doctors at Queen Mary hospital in Sidcup insist that Nmachi – whose name means "beauty of God" in the couple's native Igbo

## **Black couple's blonde white baby riddle**

language – is not an albino.

Her stunned parents, who have two black children, just "sat and stared" at their white baby when she arrived. "We both just sat there after the birth staring at her," said Ihegboro.

Mum Angela said: "She is beautiful, a miracle baby."

Despite jokingly asking whether he was the father, Ihegboro said: "Of course she is mine. My wife is true to me. Even if she hadn't been, the baby wouldn't have looked like that!"

Pale skin genes can skip generations but neither Ben nor

Angela Ihegboro – who only moved to Britain five years ago – know of any white heritage in either of their families.

"She doesn't look like an albino child. Not like the ones I have seen in Nigeria or in books. She just looks like a healthy white baby."

"My mum is a black Nigerian although she has a bit fairer skin than mine. But we don't know of any white ancestry."

"We wondered if it was a genetic twist. But even then, what is with the long curly blonde hair?"

The couple also have an older

daughter, Dumebi, 3, and a son, Chisom, 4.

Ihegboro said their son was even more confused than them.

"Our boy keeps coming to look at his sister and looks puzzled."

"We are a black family. Suddenly he has a white sister. But all that matters is that she is healthy and that we love her."

Skin colour is believed to be determined by up to seven different genes working together.

If a woman is of mixed race, her eggs will usually contain a mixture of genes coding for both black and white skin. Similarly, a

man of mixed race will have a variety of different genes in his sperm. When these eggs and sperm come together, they will create a baby of mixed race.

Very occasionally, the egg or sperm might contain genes coding for one skin colour. If both the egg and sperm contain all white genes, the baby will be white. If both contain just the versions for black skin, the baby will be black.

In 2006 a British mixed race couple gave birth to twin girls, one white and the other black.

Both Kylie and her partner Remi Horder, 17, are of mixed race. Their mothers are both white and their fathers are black.

But the chances of their twins having different skin colours was one in a million. – Daily Mail

## *DONATING EGGS AND SPERM – IS IT AN OPTION FOR YOU ?*

Infertility is not a female problem any more ... it occurs much more amongst men than ever before. It is therefore advisable for couples that struggle to fall pregnant to seek the medical advice of an infertility specialist as soon as possible in order for a problem to be diagnosed early and for correct treatment to be administered.

But what does a couple do if a woman does not have any eggs left or if the man cannot produce his own sperm ? This is possible for a variety of reasons. Using eggs or sperm from a donor egg program or sperm bank becomes a real option. The process is managed very professionally if a couple decide on this route using eggs or sperm from an unknown person. The biological record of the donor will be matched as closely as possible to the couple to ensure that the baby blends into the family “makeup” of the couple.

For obvious reasons, most couples would want to keep the fact of using donor eggs or sperm a secret, especially from family. The entire scenario becomes more complicated if a couple decide to use eggs or sperm from a member of the family to ensure that the family genes remain intact. While the couple will give birth to the child and may opt to “forget” the process, it may be more difficult for the relative who donated the eggs or sperm to forget his/her part in the process as the child will remain a permanent reminder that he/she fathered/mothered a child. A relative that is approached to be a donor must consider the long-term impact of such a decision. An emotional decision to be a donor may have disastrous consequences at a later stage for the couple, the donor but most importantly for the emotional wellbeing of the child.



Researchers at the Centre for Reproductive Medicine of Thrace in Greece found the most serious risks of egg and sperm donation to be emotional and ethical. The religion one subscribes to will also guide an individual in terms of choosing the donor egg/sperm route. Ultimately, it is an individual decision that must be taken after much thought, discussion with trusted friends and research into professional donor programs.

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## *HOW THE EGG DONATION INDUSTRY HAS TRANSFORMED*

With increasing change in lifestyles, so comes increasing infertility and increasingly changing infertility solutions. This has caused a significant change in the egg donation industry availing people with immediate information, access to egg donor profiles and an online solution.

The development of an egg donation agency is a reasonably recent aspect. Egg donor recipients are however cautioned to find appropriate and reputable establishments and seek for professional services in the egg donation industry.



Aspects to consider for quality services include the experience of the egg donation agency, the number of egg donors in the egg donor database, the percentage of pre-screened egg donors to total donors, number of programs facilitated and timeous response provided by the egg donor agency. Confirmation of some aspects above can be cleared by finding the egg donor website regularly updated, extensive information about the egg donor profiles, links to the egg donation website by other establishments. These aspects all confirm the reality of the offering.

The role of an egg donor agency is quite extensive and includes the role of egg donor recruitment, high level screening, matching egg donor profiles with the recipients of donor eggs and close facilitation of the egg donor program in conjunction with the fertility clinic. As egg donors are obviously people, so human aspects will always crop up impacting on the egg donation program.

A well-managed egg donor program will have a low adverse implication for the egg donation recipient, but assurance is required that unforeseen aspects will be timeously and professionally resolved as best as possible. Baby2mom Egg Donation Agency – [www.baby2mom.co.za](http://www.baby2mom.co.za) is able to offer recipients of donor eggs an easy and quick access to a full and detailed egg donor database of hundreds of egg donor profiles. As the egg donation industry changes and requires recipients to have more information, so this egg donor agency provides more and detailed information about the egg donation programs and the egg donors supporting this process.

Useful contacts / reads :

1. Vitalab Fertility Clinic - (011) 911 4700 / [info@vitalab.com](mailto:info@vitalab.com)
2. Cape Fertility Clinic - (021) 674 2088 / [ivflab@capefertilityclinic.co.za](mailto:ivflab@capefertilityclinic.co.za)
3. Potter DA and Hanin JS – “What to do when you can't get pregnant : The complete Guide to All the Technologies for Couples Facing Fertility Problems”
4. <http://www.bioartfertility.co.za>
5. <http://www.capefertilityclinic.co.za>
6. <http://www.carefertility.com>
7. <http://www.vitalab.com>
8. <http://www.medfem.co.za>
9. <http://www.bedwards.myweb.absamail.co.za> (Surro-Moms SA)
10. <http://www.fertilitysa.org.za> (“2008 Guidelines for Gamete Donation” by the Policy Committee of the South African Society of Reproductive Science and Surgery)

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*Happy Women's Day !*

TISN wishes all women a very blessed Women's Day on Monday 9<sup>th</sup> August 2010. May you be reminded of how special you are. Your unique touch adds life to any occasion ... your threshold for pain ensures that others are spared as you carry the burden ... always remember that God carries you !