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OBJECTIVE: To compare the ovarian stimulation characteristics of the new folitropin alfa filled by mass (r-hFSH-fbm) vs. the conventional folitropin alfa filled by bioassay (r-hFSH-bio) in the same egg donor patients.

DESIGN: Retrospective observational.

MATERIALS AND METHODS: From our egg donor program we identified 9 donors who had two egg retrieval cycles, one with r-hFSH-bio (Gonal-f Multidose®) and other one with r-hFSH-fbm (Gonal-f RFF®), acting as their own control, for a total of 18 cycles. The protocol of ovarian stimulation was exactly the same in both cycles consisting of GnRH suppression (luteal phase) followed by exclusive stimulation with r-hFSH alfa. Data collected comprised of age, BMI, total days and total amount of r-hFSH, E2 levels at hCG, follicular numbers and diameters, number of oocytes retrieved, fertilized, cleavage and embryo quality. Data was analyzed by JMP 5.0 software with paired T-test for continuous variables and Chi-square test for categorical data as appropriate; significance was set up at p < 0.05.

RESULTS: The results summarized in the table are expressed as mean ± standard deviation. The Estradiol peak was statistically higher with the r-hFSH-fbm than with r-hFSH-bio (2,887 vs 2361 pg/ml) (p < 0.05). The total amount of FSH utilized, the number of follicles retrieved, eggs fertilized, cleavage embryos and the total number of embryos at day 3 or 5, showed a positive trend in favor of r-hFSH-fbm, although the differences did not reach statistical significance.

CONCLUSION: These results suggest that Folitropin alfa filled-by-mass, (r-hFSH-fbm) is more effective than Folitropin alfa filled-by-bioassay for the ovarian stimulation of egg donor patients. The larger number of eggs and embryos obtained with r-hFSH-fbm although did not reach statistical significance, may be clinically relevant for recipients of donor eggs. Future prospective studies with a larger group of patients are needed to confirm our observations.

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