Genetics and IVF Institute, GIVF [1]

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In 1978 in England, Steptoe and Roberts achieved the first successful birth of a child conceived using IVF, the process of fertilizing egg [8] and sperm [9] cells outside of the human body in a laboratory. IVF begins with egg [8] retrieval. During egg [8] retrieval, a physician collects mature eggs from a woman by using sonogram imaging and guiding a small needle through the woman’s vaginal wall and into the woman’s ovaries to extract her eggs. A physician then places the eggs in a petri dish and fertilizes them with donor sperm [9]. Once the eggs are successfully fertilized and divide into eight cells, a physician uses a catheter to place the developing eggs in the woman’s uterus [15]. In a successful IVF treatment, at least one egg [8] will implant in the woman’s uterus [15]. Steptoe and Roberts provided IVF treatments to Lesley and John Brown for two years before their daughter, Louise Brown, was born on 25 July 1978. Since then, IVF has helped many infertile couples conceive children worldwide.

Shortly after the birth of Louise Brown, Schulman left the National Institutes of Health [11] and created GIVF. In 1983, Schulman became a professor at George Washington University [16] in Washington, DC. There, he met Andrew Dorfmann, a graduate student studying reproductive genetics. In 1984, Schulman and Dorfmann officially established GIVF in Fairfax, Virginia, as a joint venture with the Fairfax Hospital Association, now called Inova Health System. As of 2018, Dorfmann is GIVF’s senior IVF embryologist.

According to the company’s website, GIVF provides non-surgical, ultrasound [17]-guided egg [8] retrieval on an outpatient basis. Prior to the development of that method, women using IVF would undergo a surgical procedure called laparoscopy. During laparoscopy, a physician makes a small incision in the woman’s lower abdomen and inserts a fiber optic instrument to retrieve eggs from her ovaries. In 1985, Schulman published a letter in the New England Journal of Medicine titled “Laparoscopy for in Vitro Fertilization: End of an Era,” in which he advocated for the use of non-invasive, ultrasound [17]-guided egg [8] retrieval in the United States after he observed physicians perform the method successfully in France. Shortly after, GIVF became the first fertility clinic in the United States to use that egg [8] retrieval technique for IVF. For the first time, women undergoing IVF treatments did not require anesthesia, a surgical procedure, or hospitalization to extract their mature eggs.

GIVF also offers genetic services and infertility [6] treatments, a combination that the company claims is unique to GIVF. According to the company’s website, that combination has improved efficiency and quality of patient care. For genetic services, GIVF used chorionic villus sampling as an alternative to other prenatal genetic testing methods available at the time. Chorionic villus sampling is a prenatal genetic testing process in which a physician removes and tests a small sample of placenta [18] tissue, or tissues that anchors the fetus [19] to the wall of the mother’s uterus [15] and provides nutrients. Physicians use the results of those tests to identify genetic traits that may cause the fetus [19] to develop abnormally. According to their website, GIVF has the
Sources

In 1984, human genetics and reproduction researcher and physician Joseph D. Schulman founded the Genetics and IVF Institute, an international organization that provides infertility treatment and genetic services to patients. IVF stands for in vitro fertilization, an infertility treatment in which a female egg is fertilized by male sperm outside of the female body. GIVF is headquartered in Fairfax, Virginia, in association with Inova Health System, formerly called the Fairfax Hospital Association, one of the largest regional hospital systems in the United States. GIVF offers multiple infertility and genetic services including IVF, donor egg and donor sperm programs, prenatal genetic diagnostic testing, and sex selection technology. GIVF was one of the first medical facilities in the United States to offer IVF and has innovated other infertility treatments and genetic services.