

ADOPTING &gt; DECISIONS

**"Dear Infertility Patient"**

Here are a few things I wish someone had told me years ago when I was surviving infertility on my way to becoming an adoptive mother.

by Julie Corby

TAGS: [Deciding to Adopt](#), [Infertility](#), [Personal Stories](#)**Dear Infertility Patient,**

I sat in that seat you're sitting in. Comfy, isn't it? Nice, rich, dark leather? Ask the receptionist for some water. They put lemons in it, very refreshing. Oh, see that door behind the front desk? That is the door the celebrities use. That big movie star with the new twins, she snuck in through there. Before you get started, I want to tell you a couple of things, things that I wish someone had told me years ago.

Your doctor, the one whom you are about to meet, is really, really nice. Those pictures of bouncy, beautiful, babies on his bulletin board are his success stories. He is pretty successful. He has three homes, one with an ocean view, drives a Porsche, and takes fantastic vacations. He likes football. He is going to make you feel more hopeful than you have felt in months. You may even have a slight spring in your step as you leave today, your grief temporarily lifted by a solid plan of action and a brand new prescription.

That woman there, she is your nurse. She is also really nice. She won't get upset if you faint after your first injection. If you slump to the floor, as I did, she will get you some juice and a cool cloth for your face. When you go for your blood draw in the next room, make sure to ask for the male phlebotomist from the Philippines. He is the gentlest and can find a vein on the first try. You will be giving a lot of blood and getting a lot of injections.

About those hormone injections, you know how you feel when you have PMS – crabby, emotional, and sort of angry? You are pretty much going to feel like that all the time. Those arguments that you have been having with your spouse about what to do next, and how you are going to pay for it, might become a bit more volatile and upsetting. You will gain weight. You will have bruises on your arms, legs, hips, and belly. People might mistake you for a junkie.

Did you cut out caffeine, as they recommended? That part sucked for me. I really *love* coffee. Have you been taking folic acid and prenatals? Are you eating yams and warm foods? How do you like acupuncture? Some women swear that adding acupuncture to their infertility treatments is what finally did the trick for them.

Oh, is that your husband who just arrived? He looks sad, lots of lines around his eyes. This is not a very fun way to spend a lunch break, I know.

Look, this is the thing. This might not work. It does for some, but not for everyone. Before you spend thousands of days, and tens or hundreds of thousands of dollars, on something that is not a sure thing, please hear me out.

I think I know how you are feeling. Maybe you feel like you aren't a real woman? Maybe you feel the reason you can't get pregnant is because, somehow, the universe or God or whatever thinks you would totally suck as a mother? Maybe you think you will never recover from that last miscarriage you had? Maybe you feel like no one understands, and that everyone else and their sister are happily pregnant with their third child. Maybe you have withdrawn from all your friends. Maybe you have changed your diet, and done anything and everything anyone has ever recommended, to help your fertility. Maybe you wish you could just crawl into bed and stay there forever.

And you, I want you to know that your wife still loves you very much. Part of the reason she wants this baby is that she can't imagine anything more profound and meaningful than having a baby with you, her soul mate. Perhaps, lately, you feel like she is treating you like some sort of superhero in boxers (briefs might inhibit reproduction), the Sperminator is here! Maybe you think she desires you only when she's ovulating? Maybe sex is all about baby-making now? Maybe it is timed and planned, and the opposite of romantic.

I have some good news for you. The test result you get today does not determine your worth as a man or your potential as a father. You have done everything you can to support your wife and her feelings. That secret beer you had last month, although your doctor said cutting out alcohol might help, has nothing to do with why this isn't working. Impregnating your wife doesn't make you a good father.

You may find out how good a father you are in the middle of the night when your baby's fever won't go down, and you need to take him to the emergency room. You may find out you are a good father when you explain the solar system to your curious six-year-old. You may find out you are a good father when you know exactly the right moment to remove those training wheels from your son's bike.

You may both find that being in a delivery room is not a prerequisite for starting a family. You may find that birthing a baby is not a requirement to be a mother. Amazing thought, isn't it? I couldn't believe it either. Perhaps you'll realize you are a mother when you let your four-year-old daughter sleep on top of you for three months, because it makes her feel safe after all the loss she has endured. Maybe you'll know when your infant son reaches his hand up to stroke your cheek.

You might get lucky, like me, and meet a child who makes you feel happier than you've ever felt before, a child so full of life that her eyes sparkle in a supernatural way. You might be fortunate enough to raise a son who is the epitome of boy, and who wakes up every morning shouting, "MAMMA!", as if he doesn't see you immediately, he will not possibly be able to begin his day. Maybe there will be pancakes, and play dates, and purple and pink. Maybe, if you are lucky, like me, the pain you are feeling now will almost completely disappear. Maybe you will find your way back to each other, and the two of you will share something that is indeed the most profound expression of love between two soul mates, raising a family. Maybe you thought that sitting where you are now is your only way to get there. It is not. All you have to do is stand up and walk out of that office. There is a great coffee shop across the street. I am happy to meet you anytime. They make an excellent cappuccino.

## HOW TO ADOPT

Everything you need to know about the adoption process, delivered monthly to your inbox.



## Adoption Agencies

### ADOPTION AGENCY

#### **Holt International Children's Services**

Eugene, OR

#### **Adoption Routes/Programs:**

U.S. Foster, International, Special Needs/Waiting Child

### ADOPTION AGENCY

#### **Bethany Christian Services**

Grand Rapids, MI

#### **Adoption Routes/Programs:**

U.S. Newborn, U.S. Foster, International, Special Needs/Waiting Child

### ADOPTION AGENCY

#### **Children's Home Society & Lutheran Social Service of Minnesota**

Saint Paul, MN

#### **Adoption Routes/Programs:**

U.S. Newborn, U.S. Foster, International, Special Needs/Waiting Child

### ADOPTION AGENCY

#### **Gladney Center for Adoption**

Fort Worth, TX

#### **Adoption Routes/Programs:**

U.S. Newborn, U.S. Foster, International, Special Needs/Waiting Child

### ADOPTION AGENCY

#### **Children's Connections, Inc.**

Lubbock, TX

#### **Adoption Routes/Programs:**

U.S. Newborn

#### **Practice State(s):**

TX

