A Textbook of Clinical Embryology
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Contents

List of Chapter Co-authors vii
Acknowledgments viii

1 Physiology of Reproduction

Introduction 1

1 Development of Reproductive Systems at the Embryo Stage 3
2 Reproductive Puberty 8
3 Physiology of the Male Reproductive System 13
4 Physiology of the Female Reproductive System 28
5 Conception 56

2 Assisted Reproductive Procedures

6 Hormonal Ovarian Treatment 71
   Raoul Orvieto and Eliezer Girsh
7 Luteal Support 85
   Eliezer Girsh and Raoul Orvieto
8 Ovum Pickup (OPU) 89
9 In Vitro Fertilization (IVF) 95
10 Embryo Culture 114
11 Embryo Transfer 126
   Eliezer Girsh and Irina Ayzikovich

3 Genetics and Preimplantation Genetic Testing

12 Cryopreservation 144
13 In Vitro Maturation (IVM) 159
14 Biopsy of Testicles 169
15 Donation and Surrogacy 182

16 Genetics and Reproduction 194
17 Preimplantation Genetic Testing (PGT) 207
   Eliezer Girsh and Mira Malcov

4 IVF Laboratory

18 Structure and Management of IVF Laboratory 226

Index 239
In 1674, Nicolaas Hartsoeker found sperm cells in the seminal fluid under magnification. Observing human sperm through a microscope, Hartsoeker believed that he saw tiny men inside the sperm, which he called Homunculus. The theory of Homunculus (1694) claimed that a tiny, formed child exists in the head of a sperm cell, which becomes engulfed in the uterus, where it grows as in an incubator. The same idea underlies the base of IVF, i.e. to grow a child in a laboratory flask instead of in the mother’s womb.
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