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Doctor charges governments with ignoring causes of infertility

By Estefania Aguirre



Rome, Italy, Dec 2, 2012 / 04:11 pm ([CNA](#)).- An Italian doctor who specializes in treating newborns says governments are not working to prevent infertility because of financial reasons.

"They would have to get rid of mercury in food, environmental pollution and endocrine disrupting chemicals, which cause infertility, and that would cost money," Doctor Carlo Bellieni said in a Nov. 28 interview with CNA.

"The States aren't encouraging public debate because it would mean possibly having to change their policies," the neonatologist charged.

According to him, the main contributor to the growth in infertility is women waiting longer to conceive children.

"The government tells you to wait as long as you want to have children, and if you have a problem, just get treatment," he said.

Bellieni also took issue with the lack of a public debate around the fertility treatment called In Vitro Fertilization, or IVF.

In a Nov. 28 article published in the Vatican newspaper L'Osservatore Romano, Bellieni about the "absence of detailed debate on IVF and a silence on the prevention of sterility, to which many newspapers seem to have only one answer: fertilization in the laboratory."

"The State doesn't want to be unpopular, and it's not fashionable to talk about IVF," said Bellieni.

But it is "not a good scientific service to the community to offer only treatment, because medicine deals with both treatment and prevention," he added.

"I really hope that the future will be preventing sterility," said Bellieni, who has been a member of the Pontifical Academy for Life for the past seven years.

“The solution to all of this is to prevent it by fighting against pollution and delayed childbearing.”

The U.K.’s National Health Service, funded by the government, currently offers free IVF treatment for women aged 23 to 39, who have been infertile for at least three years or have an unidentified cause of infertility.

And treatment could also be offered beginning in 2013 to same-sex couples and women aged up to 42, according to a May 22, 2012 Health Service article.

In vitro is commonly used for women who have problems with their fallopian tubes and involves a scientist fertilizing an egg in a petri dish. The new child is then implanted in the womb.

The Church explained its teaching on IVF in the 1987 document “Donum Vitae” (Gift of Life). The Vatican’s Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith maintained in the document that a child has “the right to be the fruit of the specific act of the conjugal love of his parents.”