

In vitro egg mixup prompts abortion, lawsuit

OSAKA (Kyodo) A public hospital mistakenly implanted a woman with a fertilized egg from another patient in September and was asked to terminate the pregnancy nine weeks later after informing her of the blunder, the Kagawa Prefectural Government said Thursday.

The accident is believed have been caused by a 61-year-old obstetrician at Kagawa Prefectural Central Hospital in Takamatsu who mixed up containers of fertilized eggs, prefectural officials said.

The woman, who was in her 20s, was found to be pregnant in October through an ultrasound exam, but the egg's development indicated it was highly likely another woman's fertilized egg.

The hospital apologized to the woman and her husband and said it has taken steps to make sure such a mixup doesn't happen again. It also said the woman could become pregnant again because she did not suffer any complications from the incident.

The woman filed a damages suit with the Takamatsu District Court earlier this month seeking ¥20 million from Kagawa Prefecture, which runs the hospital.



Fiasco: Yuzo Matsumoto (left), Kagawa Prefectural Central Hospital head, and OB-GYN chief Dr. Masaru Yonezawa apologize Thursday over an in vitro egg mixup. KYODO PHOTO

"She is not satisfied with the explanations of the hospital," her lawyer said.

Yuzo Matsumoto, the head of the hospital, apologized publicly. "It is unimaginable how she suffered when she faced the abortion after experiencing the peak of joy over her pregnancy. We feel very sorry for her," he said.

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