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JOURNAL ARTICLE

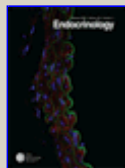
Increased levels of interleukin-6 in seminal plasma of infertile men

R. K. Naz and P. Kaplan

Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology, Albert Einstein College of Medicine, Bronx, New York 10461.

The presence of various cytokines, namely the tumor necrosis factor (TNF-alpha), interferon (IFN-gamma), and interleukins (IL-1 beta and IL-6), was investigated in seminal plasma of fertile, infertile, and immunoinfertile men using specific immunoradiometric assays. TNF-alpha and IL-1 beta were not detected. IFN-gamma was detected, but the differences between the levels of fertile and infertile/immunoinfertile were not significant ($P > 0.05$). IL-6 was detected in seminal plasma with significantly higher levels in infertile/immunoinfertile men compared to those of fertile men. IL-6 was also present in sera, and interestingly, the levels in sera were lower than those in seminal plasma. IL-6 levels in seminal plasma correlated significantly with some sperm parameters and penetration rates in the human sperm penetration assay (SPA). These findings suggest that IL-6 is associated with infertility and may be of importance in specific diagnosis and treatment of male infertility.

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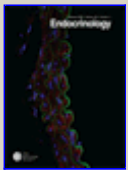
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