Enhancing Pregnancy Outcomes in Women with Thin Endometrium: Integrating Clinical and Regenerative Approaches

Kurbaniyazova Feruza Zafarjonovna

Samarkand state medical university

Obstetrics and gynecology department №1

Abstract

Thin endometrium remains a significant obstacle to successful embryo implantation and pregnancy in assisted reproductive technologies (ART). This article provides an in-depth exploration of the challenges posed by thin endometrium (≤7 mm) and offers a comprehensive clinical and regenerative approach to improving endometrial receptivity[1]. By combining traditional pharmacological treatments with cutting-edge regenerative therapies, including platelet-rich plasma (PRP), stem cell therapy, and granulocyte colony-stimulating factor (G-CSF), we propose a multifaceted approach aimed at optimizing uterine conditions and improving pregnancy success in affected women[2].

Keywords: Thin endometrium, fertility, endometrial receptivity, regenerative medicine, assisted reproductive technology (ART), platelet-rich plasma, stem cell therapy, granulocyte colony-stimulating factor

1. Introduction

Endometrial thickness plays a crucial role in the success of embryo implantation during assisted reproductive technology (ART). An optimal endometrial thickness of ≥8 mm is often associated with higher implantation and pregnancy rates. However, a significant proportion of women undergoing ART present with thin endometrium (≤7 mm), which can compromise embryo implantation[3]. These women frequently struggle with reduced uterine blood flow, poor angiogenesis, and impaired endometrial decidualization. Consequently, alternative treatment strategies are necessary to improve endometrial receptivity and increase the likelihood of a successful pregnancy[4].

In this article, we will examine both traditional and emerging therapeutic options, focusing on regenerative treatments and molecular approaches that aim to enhance the endometrial environment. By exploring the pathophysiology of thin endometrium and reviewing the latest research, we present a clinical framework that combines pharmacological and regenerative therapies to optimize endometrial function and improve ART outcomes[5].

2. Pathophysiology of Thin Endometrium

Thin endometrium can result from multiple causes, including previous uterine surgeries (e.g., curettage, myomectomy), intrauterine adhesions, chronic infections (e.g., chronic endometritis), hormonal imbalances (especially hypoestrogenism), or idiopathic factors. The pathophysiology of thin endometrium is closely tied to impaired endometrial

angiogenesis, inadequate stromal decidualization, and decreased expression of key implantation markers.

Key Molecular Mechanisms:

- **Impaired Angiogenesis:** Reduced expression of vascular endothelial growth factor (VEGF) and other angiogenic factors limits the formation of blood vessels in the endometrium, affecting nutrient delivery to the embryo.
- **Deficient Stromal Decidualization:** Insufficient decidualization, which is the transformation of the endometrial stromal cells into decidual cells, is crucial for embryo implantation. Thin endometrium often lacks proper stromal differentiation.
- **Immune Modulation:** Abnormal immune responses in the endometrial lining may disrupt the delicate balance necessary for successful embryo implantation.

3. Current and Emerging Treatment Options

A variety of clinical strategies are available for managing thin endometrium, with a focus on improving blood flow, promoting tissue regeneration, and restoring the molecular pathways crucial for implantation.

3.1 Estrogen Therapy and Adjunctive Treatments

Estrogen therapy is typically the first-line treatment for women with thin endometrium, as it stimulates endometrial proliferation and growth. High-dose estradiol is often prescribed, either alone or in combination with other agents. Adjuvants like sildenafil citrate, which enhances uterine blood flow by promoting vasodilation, have been used with some success, although evidence regarding their effectiveness remains inconclusive.

3.2 Platelet-Rich Plasma (PRP) Infusion

PRP has emerged as a promising treatment for thin endometrium. This therapy involves the intrauterine infusion of autologous plasma rich in growth factors such as PDGF, TGF-β, and VEGF. These factors promote tissue repair, angiogenesis, and endometrial regeneration. Several studies have reported significant improvements in endometrial thickness and pregnancy outcomes after PRP treatment, offering a promising regenerative approach for women with thin endometrium.

3.3 Granulocyte Colony-Stimulating Factor (G-CSF)

G-CSF is a growth factor that plays a critical role in cell proliferation and immune regulation. Recent studies suggest that G-CSF administration, either via intrauterine or subcutaneous routes, may improve endometrial thickness and promote local immune tolerance necessary for embryo implantation. While promising, further clinical studies are needed to establish the optimal dosing and mechanism of action for G-CSF in this context.

3.4 Stem Cell Therapy

Stem cell therapy has shown promise in regenerating the thin endometrium and improving fertility outcomes. Bone marrow-derived stem cells (BMSCs) and menstrual blood-derived stromal cells (MenSCs) are capable of secreting paracrine factors that enhance angiogenesis, epithelial regeneration, and tissue remodeling. Clinical evidence supports the use of stem cell therapies to restore endometrial integrity and function, providing hope for women with refractory cases of thin endometrium.

3.5 Hysteroscopic Evaluation and Treatment

Hysteroscopy is essential for identifying and managing structural uterine abnormalities such as adhesions, fibroids, or polyps, which may contribute to thin endometrium. Treatment of intrauterine pathologies through hysteroscopic surgery, followed by estrogen therapy, can significantly enhance endometrial regeneration and improve ART outcomes.

4. Integrative Treatment Protocol

Based on current evidence and clinical best practices, we propose the following individualized, stepwise treatment algorithm for patients with thin endometrium:

Step	Intervention	Description
1. Baseline Assessment	Transvaginal ultrasound, Doppler studies, hysteroscopy	Assess endometrial thickness, blood flow, and identify structural issues.
2. Phase 1: Estrogen Priming	High-dose estradiol + vasodilators (e.g., sildenafil)	Enhance endometrial growth and uterine perfusion.
3. Phase 2: PRP or G-CSF	Intrauterine PRP or G-CSF infusion	Promote tissue regeneration and improve angiogenesis.
4. Phase 3: Stem Cell Therapy	Stem cell infusion (e.g., BMSCs, MenSCs)	Stimulate tissue repair and improve endometrial function.
5. Phase 4: Personalized Embryo Transfer	Timing based on ERA (Endometrial Receptivity Analysis) results	Tailor embryo transfer timing to optimize implantation success.

5. Discussion

The management of thin endometrium presents a multifactorial challenge in reproductive medicine, often requiring a combination of clinical strategies and advanced therapies to achieve successful implantation. While traditional treatments such as estrogen therapy can help to stimulate endometrial growth, their effectiveness is limited in many patients. Emerging regenerative therapies, including PRP, stem cell therapy, and G-CSF, offer

promising alternatives and may help to enhance endometrial receptivity, especially in women who do not respond to conventional treatments.

Furthermore, integrating molecular profiling and personalized treatment protocols, such as ERA testing, allows for better timing of embryo transfer, improving the chances of success. The ongoing research into regenerative medicine and the molecular pathways involved in endometrial receptivity holds significant potential for transforming the management of thin endometrium and improving ART outcomes.

6. Conclusion

The treatment of thin endometrium in women undergoing ART requires a comprehensive, individualized approach. By combining traditional pharmacological treatments with innovative regenerative therapies such as PRP, stem cell therapy, and G-CSF, clinicians can optimize endometrial receptivity and improve pregnancy outcomes. As further research is conducted and new therapies emerge, the ability to personalize treatment for women with thin endometrium will continue to advance, offering greater hope for those struggling with infertility.

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