



NEWS RELEASE

Jan7Merck and RESOLVE Remind Couples That a Conversation with a Specialist Could Be The Start of Something Small

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For the 1 in 8 Couples Having Difficulty Getting Pregnant, New Campaign Offers Encouragement and Resources to Help Spark the Conversation with a Fertility Doctor

Why me? It's a powerful question that more than 1 in 8 couples – seven million Americans – will likely ask themselves if they have trouble getting pregnant. Infertility is a common medical condition, one that can be an extremely emotional and difficult experience for couples. It's often the emotional barriers, or simply a lack of information, that leads couples to delay seeking the help of a fertility specialist, which may impact their success. Today - the first day of National Infertility Awareness Week (NIAW) - Merck is introducing FertilityGuide.com, a new resource for couples, and collaborating with RESOLVE: The National Infertility Association to launch It's Just A Conversation. Both the online destination and the awareness campaign aim to inspire couples to remain hopeful and educate themselves by starting a conversation with a fertility specialist.

According to the American Society for Reproductive Medicine (ASRM), for women over 35 years of age who have been trying to conceive for six months, or for women under 35 and have been trying to conceive for over a year, it may be time for a fertility evaluation. A recent survey of 57 participants showed that 91 percent of those currently seeing a fertility specialist wish that they had gone earlier.

"Many couples having difficulty conceiving are looking for answers and don't know where to turn. To some, speaking to a fertility specialist seems intimidating, but in reality, a specialist can be your biggest ally, providing you

with the information you're looking for and presenting options you didn't know you had," said Dr. Roshini Raj, MD. "As a doctor and a mom, I've been on both sides of the conversation – in fact, I spoke to a fertility specialist in my journey. Our message to couples today is, don't wait to get the right kind of help. A conversation with a specialist is a first step."

Patient advocate and RESOLVE support group leader Kim Griffiths knows firsthand how valuable that conversation can be. "I never imagined that I'd have trouble getting pregnant, so when my ob-gyn referred me to a fertility specialist, I didn't know what to expect. I thought that a specialist was a last resort that I would never need, but my specialist gave me options and helped to support me in my journey to become pregnant." Griffiths continued, "I would encourage women to be their own advocate and to make that appointment. After all – it's just a conversation."

The It's Just A Conversation campaign includes:

- Insight and tips from leading women's health expert, Dr. Roshini Raj
- A new interactive website, **www.fertilityguide.com**, provides the guidance we know couples are looking for, such as:
 - Fertility Knowledge Quiz
 - Doctor Discussion Guide
 - Fertility Specialist Locator

Couples are encouraged to visit **www.fertilityguide.com** to help them start their own conversation with a fertility specialist. Visiting a specialist and having an open conversation may be a productive and rewarding step in a couple's fertility journey.

"At RESOLVE, we are committed to empowering women and men living with infertility and that's why we are excited about this initiative," said Barbara Collura, RESOLVE's Executive Director. "We want couples to remain hopeful in their journey and visit a fertility specialist early-on to get the support and help that they deserve. During that important conversation, you will learn about your specific circumstances so you can explore your options from a place of knowledge – that's when everything can begin to change."

About RESOLVE: The National Infertility Association

Established in 1974, RESOLVE: The National Infertility Association is a non-profit organization with the only established, nationwide network mandated to promote reproductive health and to ensure equal access to all family building options for men and women experiencing infertility or other reproductive disorders. One in eight U.S. couples of childbearing age has difficulty getting pregnant. RESOLVE addresses this public health issue by providing

community to these women and men, connecting them with others who can help, empowering them to find resolution and giving voice to their demands for access to all family building options. For more information, visit **www.RESOLVE.org**.

About Merck

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