

MEDICINE

Twenty minutes to fertility

TILL recently, blocks in the fallopian tubes had to be removed through a difficult and expensive surgery involving a 10-day stay in the hospital. But a technique, recently introduced in the country, has done away with the need for an operation.

A specialised system of small wires and tubes is inserted through the vagina into the uterus to remove the block. The procedure takes 20 minutes after which the patient is allowed to go home. Medical sources claim that recanalisation is established in more



Off the block. A 10-week-old fetus

than 80 per cent of the patients while in surgery the success rate is only about 20 per cent. Besides, it is said that this method is cheaper than other infertility treatments. Kovai Medical Center and Hospital in Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu, has so far treated 20 patients using this method.

This 300-bed, super-speciality hospital is also making strides in interventional radiology or embolisation, where blood vessels are blocked with solid particles, detachable balloons, spring coils or liquid polymers. According to hospital authorities, major surgical problems involving practically any system of the

body are tackled using specialised imaging equipment through a small puncture in the skin.

Embolisation can be used for blocking abnormal clusters of blood vessels in the brain or any other part of the body. It is also used to reduce the blood supply to a tumour before surgery. Another application of this method is to inject anti-cancer drugs into a tumour through a blood vessel, thereby reducing the side-effects of these drugs.

An alternative to surgery which is being practised with considerable success in this hospital is angioplasty. This technique of opening blocked vessels with the help of balloons has helped many patients, especially those suffering from coronary heart disease. Unlike cardiac surgery, no post-operative recuperation is required and total hospitalisation period is two to three days.