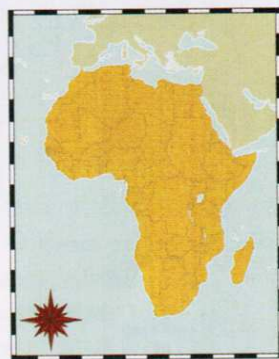




tune in, boost fertility

If you're addicted to your iPod or other MP3 device, now you can turn the time you would have been listening to Lady Gaga into time spent trying to boost your fertility. Circle + Bloom offers a 28-day program of audio programming designed to harness the mind/body connection and help foster conception. The 28 daily tracks, approximately 15 minutes each, follow the body's natural reproductive cycle. Each daily session includes a combination of music, words, and guided instructions designed to help the body manage stress and get ready for conception. For more information, a free trial version, or to order (\$125 for the downloadable program), visit circlebloom.com



low-cost IVF ... in africa

A round of in vitro fertilization (IVF) costs up to \$12,000 in the U.S., but a new organization is offering the procedure in Africa for a fraction of that price. The Low Cost IVF Foundation (LCIF) in Switzerland has funded three fertility clinics in Africa—in Sudan, Tanzania, and South Africa. The clinics are offering IVF to couples for less than \$300.

In spite of its high birth rate, Africa has a high rate of infertility, often because of untreated sexually transmitted infections or post-childbirth infections. And the social stigma of infertility is high there.

The methods being used to lower costs in Africa may eventually make IVF more affordable all over the world. By skipping expensive injectable drugs that can produce up to 12 eggs per cycle in favor of using cheaper oral drugs which produce up to four eggs (and have fewer side effects), the cost is reduced almost \$1,000 per cycle. By incubating embryos in small devices placed inside a woman's body rather than in laboratory incubators, thousands more are saved. Smaller and less expensive ultrasound equipment saves on the cost of monitoring, too.