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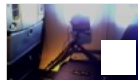
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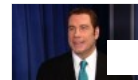
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# When Anonymous Egg Donors Have Genetic Diseases

Jessica Wing Died of Cancer; Her Mom Wants to Warn the Family Who Conceived With Potentially 'Sick Eggs'

BY BARBARA PINTO  
March 28, 2008



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By all accounts, graduate student Jessica Grace Wing was the ideal egg donor. At 5 feet 11 inches, she was tall, slender and attractive. She modeled in her teenage years and would go on to graduate from Stanford University. This made her an ideal donor, "the kind of donor that would attract a great deal of money," her mother, Dr. Jennifer Schneider, said.

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But seven years after she was paid to donate her eggs, Jessica was diagnosed with colon cancer, at the age of 29. She died two years later. Hers was a rare diagnosis for someone so young and something Jessica's biological children will never know, despite Jessica's mother's attempts to contact the broker who sold her daughter's eggs.

But when Schneider asked the egg donation broker to reveal the identities of the families who had received the eggs, the broker said she had destroyed her records. Jessica donated her eggs three times.

"At the time she died, I tried to get hold of the [in vitro fertilization] clinics. The egg broker and I couldn't get hold of anybody," Schneider said. "Nobody was interested in talking to me, and I understand why.

"The conflict of interest is the financial interest versus the welfare of the donor and of the children who are born," she said. "I think it's very hard for people to regulate themselves when there are billions and billions of dollars involved."

Colon cancer can be inherited. Because Wing was diagnosed at the age of 29, her biological children, Schneider said, should start getting colonoscopies at the age of 19. Schneider points out that very few families would think to have their children receive colonoscopies in their teens or 20s.

In addition to the families, Schneider also worries about the welfare of other women who are egg donors. She is concerned that the fertility drugs used to help her daughter produce eggs may have contributed to her cancer, and she wants studies done on other women who have also donated eggs and may have ended up with an early cancer diagnosis.

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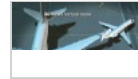
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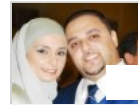
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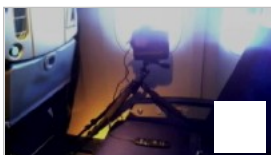
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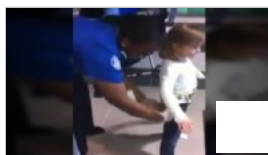
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