



How this mum achieved her dream of twins through IVF at 46

Sandra Nardo met her husband later in life and wanted to become a mum. This is how old they were when they gave birth to twins.

Having a family is something Sandra Nardo always knew was going to happen but for her and husband Maurice Balletta, it just happened a little later than expected.

Ms Nardo, 46, and Mr Balletta, 52, welcomed twins in July and are over the moon, even if a little sleep deprived.

Their babies, daughter Gia Cecilia and son Rocco Andrea Balletta, were born at Epworth Freemasons and delivered by [obstetrician Dr Stephen Cole](#), who specialises in twin pregnancies.

“My mum comes to help three days a week and Maurice’s mum is here two days a week,” Ms Nardo said. “I couldn’t do it without them, family is so important.”

Their journey to parenthood was propelled by IVF after the couple met “later in life” on New Year’s Day in 2020.



Maurice Balletta and Sandra Nardo with their eight-week-old twins Rocco and Gia who were born at Epworth Freemasons. Picture: David Caird

“We just knew we both had the same intentions (about having a family),” Ms Nardo said. “And as soon as we came out of lockdown, I got the ball rolling. We had tried naturally for a year, but given my age, I didn’t want to give it too long, so I got onto the IVF wagon.”

The Melbourne couple were delighted to learn they were expecting identical twins two years ago, but the high-risk multiple pregnancy sadly ended in miscarriage.

“We are rightly concerned about the increased risks in pregnancy in older women, particularly when that is combined with multiple pregnancy,” Dr Cole said.

He said the two together compounded risks. But [Dr Cole](#) said older women who come into pregnancy with good medical health and who are able to conceive a chromosomally normal baby “more often than not” have good outcomes.

“There are higher chances of things not going smoothly but the majority of people, even in their mid to late 40s who are healthy when they start their pregnancy, will typically have a good outcome,” he said.



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Dr Cole said a father's age was less of a concern compared to maternal age.

"Although it can be a contributor to reduced fertility."

He said for older couples they did need to consider how long they were prepared to try naturally before turning to IVF.

"Pregnancy (success) gets less with every year that goes by and many older couples will find themselves needing fertility assistance," Dr Cole said.

"I think the good thing though is that, if for whatever reason, people don't get the opportunity to have children when they are younger still have avenues, and there's still hope and opportunities."



Maurice Balletta and Sandra Nardo with son Rocco and daughter Gia. Ms Nardo said. “I think I always knew my time would come”. David Caird

For Ms Nardo, having twins came as no surprise.

“Twins run in my family. I’ve got, like, five sets of first cousin twins on my dad’s side,” she said.

And while she said husband Maurice was starting to think he would never become a dad, she never gave up on motherhood.

“I was very determined. I just made sure I gave it everything I had. And you know, we just kept trying. I think I always knew my time would come.”



Robyn Riley Medical editor