

T H E O R A N G E C O U N T Y

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50 EGG SUITS SETTLED

THE SETTLEMENT



RICARDO ASCH

► **THE MONEY:** Fifty couples will share a total of \$10 million from the University of California. Some legal and ethical issues are not resolved by settlement.

► **RELATED DEVELOPMENTS:** The California Supreme Court delays a hearing at which settlement terms were to have been disclosed.

► **WHAT'S NEXT:** Two dozen civil lawsuits remain.

FERTILITY: UCI will pay \$10 million in the clinic scandal; 24 suits plus criminal cases remain.

By KIM CHRISTENSEN,
SUSAN KELLEHER
and MICHELLE NICOLSI
The Orange County Register

ORANGE — Fifty couples who claimed that their eggs were stolen by UCI fertility doctors have settled their lawsuits for a total of \$10 million, resolving about half the cases stemming from one of the biggest medical scandals in U.S. history.

"This scenario we were able to come up with was in the best interest of these women and their spouses so they could put this behind them," plaintiffs' attorney

Lawrence Eisenberg said at a news conference Friday. "It also allows the university to attempt to close a dark chapter in its history."

The announced settlements, which will come out of taxpayers' pockets, do not affect 24 pending lawsuits as well as criminal cases against the three doctors — two of them now fugitives — who ran the University of California, Irvine's once-renowned Center for Reproductive Health.

Nor do they resolve other complicated legal and ethical issues, including whether women whose

eggs were stolen should have a stake in the lives of the children who were born as a result.

"Many of them have to live with the realization that their children are being held and loved and raised by someone else," said Debra Krahel, a former UCI administrator whose whistleblower complaint and cooperation with federal investigators brought the scandal to light.