

Surgeon Terminates Wrong Fetus - Loses License

Florida state officials stripped a Sarasota doctor of his license after he aborted the wrong fetus in a woman carrying twins. The procedure, known as selective termination, was supposed to be performed on the fetus with congenital birth defects.

During a state hearing the doctor blamed his mistake on ultrasound equipment that he said didn't allow him to view the fetuses as clearly as possible. In January 2006, he agreed to treat the woman, who was roughly four months pregnant with twins conceived through en vitro fertilization. Doctors had advised her that selective termination was an option after she learned the male fetus had many health issues, including a possible heart defect and Downs syndrome. The female twin appeared normal.

About 10 days after the procedure, the woman returned to the doctors who were monitoring her pregnancy, when an ultrasound revealed the male fetus was still alive. She would later terminate the second twin as well.

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