

Press release

Remote assisted reproduction

## Telemedicine in the face of coronavirus

### Institut Marquès presents a new technique for self-freezing of sperm

Covid-19 has caused that those who were carrying out an assisted reproduction treatment to temporarily having to pause it. But, despite the impossibility of travelling and thanks to technology, many of them continue carrying out some of the procedures remotely.

In times of lockdown, videoconferencing is an ideal channel for those patients that, from all over the world, come to Spanish centres to become parents. Consultations with the doctor are carried out by phone or online and patients can perform the necessary medical tests in their country. The results are then sent to Spain, where the assisted reproduction specialist delivers the diagnosis and prescribes the treatment. In this way, patients only need to travel for the essential.

Now, to make it even easier, [Institut Marquès](#) presents a new technique that allows the male himself to freeze his sperm in his own home to send it to the clinic. It is called [Sperm Freezekit](#) and it is being offered with great success to patients from over 50 countries. ***“Telemedicine is the medicine of the future”***, states Dr Marisa López-Teijón. ***“Innovation in health should be oriented to facilitate processes to patients and we have to take advantage of the advances in email communication and fast messaging. There are more and more Skype consultations, apps for monitoring patients with chronic diseases, surgical interventions with remote control and now we have the “telesperm”***, explains the Director of Institut Marquès and Doctor of the year 2019 in Assisted Reproduction.

#### **The desire to become a parent overcomes all difficulties**

There are several reasons why sperm freezing is indicated for reproductive purposes: to perform a sperm analysis, for the treatment of in Vitro Fertilization or to preserve fertility, among others. Currently, most patients cannot travel to deliver their sample to the clinic, so, Institut Marquès has developed a simple protocol for self-freezing of sperm. People without prior training are able to perform it outside the laboratory, getting the same results as expert biologists.

Sperm Freezekit adapts to the user's schedule; the patient can choose when he wants to send his sample, wherever he is. The new kit is sent directly to his address; he will receive a liquid nitrogen vapour tank, together with everything necessary for the sperm cryopreservation, as well as detailed [instructions](#) and the description of the steps to follow. The procedure is quick and simple.



The patient has 48 hours to send back his sample once cryopreserved in the interior of the tank. The delivery company will pick it up at the appointed address in order to have it delivered to the clinic. Once it reaches the laboratory, a part of ejaculate the sample is unthawed to confirm the spermatozoa's vitality and the patient is informed that the process has been completed successfully.

### **Surprisingly easy, safe and effective**

Sperm Freezekit users believe it is a "surprisingly easy" method. According to the study that Institut Marquès presented at the IX Congress of the Association for the Study of Reproduction Biology ASEBIR, after "home" freezing, there are no significant differences in the progressive mobility of sperm, neither in their morphology or vitality. The results are the same as the ones obtained by biologists at the laboratory. 67% of the participants in the study say that they prefer to have their sperm cryopreserved outside the clinic. This option has been providential during this period in which travelling has been restricted.

### **Beyond COVID 19**

The shipment adapts to the patient's schedule, so that he can choose when they want to send their sample. This procedure is a significant time-saver, a convenient, safe, easy to use alternative for men who prefer to collect the sample in the privacy of their home and share this part of the Assisted Reproduction process with their partner. In addition, it is also an economical saving, since travelling can be avoided.

Many men experience with pressure the moment of obtaining their sperm sample in the clinic and define it as a stressful situation. The new Sperm Freezekit is a comfortable alternative for men who prefer to collect the sample in the privacy of their home and share this part of the Assisted Reproduction process with their partner

Furthermore, it is indicated for special circumstances such as women who wish to become pregnant and, for various reasons, are physically estranged from their partners

for a longer or less prolonged period of time. For instance, men relocated in military bases, merchant ships, oil or scientific platforms, as well as those living in distant countries and even men who are in prison.

## **About Institut Marquès**

*Institut Marquès is a Barcelona based centre of international standing in Gynaecology, Obstetrics and Assisted Reproduction with branches in Barcelona, London, Ireland (Dublin and Clane), Italy (Rome and Milan) and Kuwait. The centre, one of the most awarded at an international level and with a wealth of experience in particularly difficult cases, helps people in more than 50 countries achieve their dream of parenthood. Institut Marquès offers the highest pregnancy success rates, with 91% per cycle in IVF with egg donation.*

*Leader in innovation, it conducts an important line of research on the benefits of music in the early stages of life, foetal stimulation and the male role in assisted reproduction treatments.*

*Institut Marquès is also involved in the research of the relationship between toxics and fertility, taking part in many initiatives that support the defence of the environment. In 2018 it started its Corporate Social Responsibility project, "The Forest of Embryos". For every child born with the help of assisted reproduction treatments, a tree is planted. Institut Marquès also supports the manifesto "Citizens for Science in Pesticide Regulation", a coalition of civil society, institutions, scientists and legal experts that demands a reform on the use of pesticides in the European Union.*

## **Links of interest:**

<https://institutomarques.com/en/assisted-reproduction/special-techniques/freezekit/>

<https://www.fertility-experiences.com/we-keep-on-innovating-sperm-freezing-carried-out-by-the-patient-himself-at-home-or-wherever-he-is/>

## **More information:**

[mireia.folguera@institutomarques.com](mailto:mireia.folguera@institutomarques.com)