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## Innovation in Male Infertility Research



The UAB has patented an innovative system to specify in a simple, cost-effective and reliable manner the infertility of a person through the study of oxidative stress on sperm, a parameter rarely studied until now. The method was developed by professor Jordi Benet and doctoral researcher Agustí Garcia Peiró from the UAB Unit in Cellular Biology and Medical Genetics. The spin-off CIMAB (*Centre d'Infertilitat Masculina i Anàlisi de Barcelona*) was founded to commercialise the method.

Male infertility requires exhaustive analyses of the sperm to determine the origins of the problem and be able to offer the most effective treatment. Presently, the main parameters studied include concentration, motility and morphology of sperm. Recently however scientists began to consider using a new parameter, sperm DNA fragmentation.

Oxidative stress in sperm is the main cause of DNA fragmentation, which is why determining this parameter may justify the presence of fragmentation and thus discard other factors. This will aid doctors in administering anti-oxidant treatments to those who really need it.

?The difference with other existing methods lies in the fact that our system is simple, quick and cost-effective, and it can be easily adapted to any laboratory?, explains Agustí Garcia Peiró. The main innovation consists in a new formulation in the analysis which permits studying spermatozoa in a very precise manner, thus minimising any false positive results when testing for oxidative stress.

In order to offer diagnoses using this new method, a new spin-off was created. CIMAB (*Centre d'Infertilitat Masculina i Anàlisi de Barcelona*) will focus its activities in determining the fertility potential of male individuals with different sperm analyses methods. It will offer services to specialists in infertility such as gynaecologists, urologists, andrologists, fertility clinics and sperm banks. Leading this innovative initiative is Agustí Garcia Peiró.

Currently 15% of all reproductive age couples suffer from infertility and in 50% of the cases the male factor is responsible.

**Agustí Garcia Peiró**

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