

# Intravaginal Incubation of Embryos is Safe and Effective and Could Save Patients Money

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*Honolulu, Hawaii-* Researchers presenting their work at the 70th Annual Meeting of the American Society for Reproductive Medicine have found that a device for incubating embryos in a patient's vagina is as safe and effective as incubator culture for embryos as part of IVF with and without ICSI (intracytoplasmic sperm injection).

In a prospective trial at the Center for Assisted Reproduction in Bedford, Texas, 33 infertile women between the ages of 18 and 38 undergoing IVF were randomly divided into two groups. One group's embryos were incubated in the INVOcell vaginal culture device while the other group's embryos were cultured in laboratory incubators.

After egg retrieval, each patient's eggs were conventionally co-incubated with sperm for two to four hours. Then, up to 10 eggs per patient were placed into the INVOcell device or moved on the next stage of traditional incubator culture. After five days of culture, patients from both groups had one or two embryos transferred to their uteruses. Embryos resulting from both culture methods were of comparable quality and pregnancy rates were similar between the groups- with 10 of 16 women from the incubator culture group and 10 of 17 women from the INVOcell group reporting ongoing pregnancies.

Another study by researchers at the Colombian Fertility and Sterility Center (CECOLFES) in Bogota showed that INVOcell vaginal embryo culture is effective for couples with male factor infertility who use ICSI.

Couples underwent 172 cycles of IVF in which their eggs fertilized through sperm microinjection were placed in the INVOcell device and incubated vaginally for 72 hours. The patients incubated, on average, four or five ICSI-fertilized eggs per cycle, 53% of which divided, with an average of two embryos transferred per cycle. Sixty five pregnancies resulted, at a rate of 38% per cycle and 40% per embryo transfer.

"In vitro fertilization is the most effective treatment for infertility and the only one that is suitable for many. IVF is also resource-intensive and its expense can put it out of reach of many patients who would benefit from it. These studies show how innovative technology may be able to reduce some of the laboratory costs and lead to wider availability of treatment," noted Charles Coddington, MD, President of the Society for Assisted Reproductive Technology.

**O-362 K Doody et al, "A Randomized Prospective Controlled Trial Confirms the Safety and Efficacy of Extended Intravaginal Culture of Embryos with INVOcell Compared to Laboratory Incubators"**

**P-651 E Lucena et al, "INVO and ICSI: A Pioneer Idea and a Real Alternative for ART"**

*The American Society for Reproductive Medicine, founded in 1944, is an organization of more than 7,000 physicians, researchers, nurses, technicians and other professionals dedicated to advancing knowledge and expertise in reproductive biology. Affiliated societies include the Society for Assisted Reproductive Technology, the Society for Male Reproduction and Urology, the Society for Reproductive Endocrinology and Infertility, the Society of Reproductive Surgeons and the Society of Reproductive Biologists and Technologists.*

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