

## Anecova: Birth of the world's first baby after assisted *in vivo* fertilization and complete *in vivo* development

**Anecova, the swiss medtech company, is proud to announce the birth of a healthy baby boy thanks to the application of its innovative *in vivo* approach to assisted reproductive treatment. For the first time in this field, a baby was born after *in vivo* fertilization and then developing fully in the womb of his mother. This birth constitutes a first in the world for the company dedicated to help families facing fertility issues.**

The baby, born in October 2009, has grown his whole term inside the womb of his mother. "This is the first time a baby, in this field, is born after *in vivo* fertilization and that no incubator has been used but instead a device placed in the uterine cavity of the mother, has mentioned Dr. Pascal Mock, inventor of the technology, co-founder of Anecova and specialist in reproductive medicine in Geneva. " This confirms that this more natural approach, less stressful for the embryo, is feasible and safe".

"This birth, and our key article published in April 2009 in *Human Reproduction* are very encouraging news for Anecova, said Martin Velasco, Executive Chairman of Anecova. Since 2007, we have been putting all our efforts into the development of a capsule system simpler to use by the doctor. I'm very proud of this success that brings us closer to our goal of offering a more natural solution which will benefit all couples who encounter difficulties to have a child".

Anecova is pursuing clinical trials to consolidate its results and further confirm this success. "We are all very excited by the news. Studies are currently ongoing in 5 centers in Europe and Switzerland, and we have currently 2 ongoing pregnancies in Lausanne, added Prof. Marc Germond, Head of the Centre of Medically Assisted Procreation, in Lausanne, and responsible for the Swiss studies at Anecova. This approach, closer to nature, could become a choice treatment if these results are confirmed".

Currently, the *in vitro* fertilization procedure involves retrieving eggs from the ovaries and fertilizing each of them *in vitro with a* spermatozoa (in a test tube in a laboratory), with a development period of 2-5 days in the incubator of the laboratory. In Anecova's approach, fertilization and embryonic development take place *in vivo*, in the Anecova capsule within the womb of the mother. The early stage embryos start their life in close communication with the maternal environment, recreating the two-way exchange of fluids and factors found in the natural development of embryos, improving the number of good quality embryos.

Anecova's capsule measures 10 mm long and less than a millimeter in diameter and is pierced with hundreds of tiny apertures (several tens of micrometers wide), to facilitate communication between the embryo and its natural environment. This technology has benefited from the active support of the Ecole Polytechnique Fédérale in Lausanne (EPFL), well-known for its expertise in microencapsulation.

### **About Anecova**

Anecova was created in 2004 by Dr. Pascal Mock and Martin Velasco. Anecova is working with world leading scientists and clinicians in the area of Assisted Reproductive treatment with the objective of developing more natural approaches. The company is ISO certified (9001 and 13485), obtained the European Certification (CE Mark) in 2007 for the Anecova-d1 device and expects to start commercialization in Europe by the end of 2010. Anecova was granted the Technology Pioneer award in 2008 by the World Economic Forum.

### **About Martin Velasco**

Considered a leading European "Business Angel" by the *Wall Street Journal*, and one of the leaders of European change by *Business Week* ("The Stars of Europe"), Martin Velasco has been based in Geneva for over 35 years, where he has contributed to the success of companies such as AC Immune, Sumerian, Speedlingua, NovImmune and Aridhia. He became fascinated by this new challenge, and in March 2004 became Dr. Pascal Mock's partner, setting up Anecova SA, based at the PSE (Parc Scientifique Ecublens) of the EPFL (head office), with its laboratories in Epalinges.

### **About Dr. Pascal Mock**

Specialised in reproductive medicine, based in the Assisted Reproductive Technology Centre at the Clinique des Grangettes, in Geneva, Switzerland and researcher at the University of Geneva in the field of human embryo implantation, Dr. Pascal Mock has always aimed to improve the treatment of infertile couples. In 2000, he came up with the novel idea of replacing the test tube used for *in vitro* fertilization by a permeable capsule, inserted in the mother's uterus, so that gametes (spermatozoa, ovules) and/or embryos would develop under more natural conditions, *in vivo*.

### **About Prof. Marc Germond**

Professor Marc Germond is head of the Center of ART (CPMA) in Lausanne, a leading IVF center in Switzerland. Besides his interest in researching novel technologies benefiting families facing fertility issues, his centers of interest are related to reproductive medicine and include; andrology, laparoscopic surgery, use of lasers for assisted hatching of embryos, importance of counseling and ethics in medically assisted procreation and parental investment of the child born following this treatment. Professor Marc Germond contributed to the publication of more than 100 articles in scientific books and journals. He is president of the F.A.B.E.R. Foundation.

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