

**UNVEILING THE TRUTH ABOUT INFERTILITY**

With egg freezing and IVF high on the UK news agenda, there is much speculation surrounding the topic of assisted fertility. From lifestyle choices that might thwart the chances of conceiving, to selecting the gender of your future baby, there’s an awful lot of confusion about fertility and fertility treatments.

To separate fact from fiction, internationally renowned **Dr Manuel Muñoz,** manager of [IVI Fertility Clinic](http://www.ivi-fertility.com/en/landing-patients/?gclid=CjwKEAiAhIejBRCKm_fTxIWyyXcSJABXY0XYzyxuVg5NlelGw3LT_fZDLmQ8c29i-SUnMGVvuT6ujhoCIhrw_wcB) in Alicante has provided answers to the common questions and myths surrounding fertility and fertility treatment:

1. **There is only one type of treatment to assist conception – MYTH**

**Dr Muñoz says:** “There are actually several types of treatment used to assist fertility. The most common treatments used for assisted pregnancy are artificial insemination, where the sperm is placed directly into the woman’s womb, in vitro fertilisation (IVF) where the egg and sperm are fertilised outside of the woman’s body before it is implanted into the womb, and egg donation, whereby a donated egg is fertilised by the sperm of the recipients partner before it is implanted. Egg freezing, in which a woman's eggs are extracted, frozen and stored for use later in life, is another treatment available to women who wish to preserve their fertility until a later age.”

1. **Infertility is due to problems in women** **– MYTH**

**Dr Muñoz says:** “It is important for couples who are struggling to conceive to understand that the grounds of infertility are almost equally shared between the male and female. A lot of people are surprised to learn that 30% of infertility cases are caused by masculine issues, such as prostrate pathologies, ejaculation problems or alterations in the semen, and 30% is caused by feminine issues, such as early menopause, cervical abnormalities or ovulation problems. The remaining 40% of infertility cases are due to combined or unexplained causes.”

1. **Egg and sperm donors are legally allowed to locate the child that was produced using their embryo – FACT**

**Dr Muñoz says:** “In the UK, all sperm and egg donors are legally able to contact children born from their donation once the child has reached 18 years old. This is also the case for donor-conceived offspring, who are able to make contact and locate the donor once they reach the age of 18. This is a huge concern for many couples who are looking to conceive using egg donation, because it takes away their choice as to what details they wish to share with their children about their conception. Because of this, thousands of British couples travel to Spain each year in search of quality medical care and egg donation which is completely anonymous.”

1. **Obese women have a lower IVF success rate – FACT**

**Dr Muñoz says:** “Being overweight *can* hinder a woman’s ability to conceive through IVF. This is because embryos work in a different way according to the female body mass index. In a recent study, IVI identified that embryos from obese women secrete fewer quantities of saturated fatty acids to the culture media compared to normal weight women, which can affect the success of implantation. Because of this, obese women will find it more difficult to conceive.”

1. **Men who suffer from HIV cannot conceive healthy children – MYTH**

**Dr Muñoz says:** “Men who are infected with HIV can conceive healthy children by undergoing ‘sperm washing’ before their sperm is used for IVF. This involves separating the sperm from the semen (as HIV is carried by the semen) in order to reduce the chance that the disease is transmitted.”

1. **You can select the gender of your baby if you undergo IVF – MYTH**

**Dr Muñoz says:** “Legislation on assisted human reproduction techniques in the UK does not permit gender selection. In the majority of European countries who offer assistance with human reproduction, the sex of the child cannot be chosen unless it is done to prevent a serious gender-related hereditary disease.”

[**www.ivi-fertility.com/en/**](http://www.ivi-fertility.com/en/)

For further information or to speak to one of the expert team from IVI please contact Shelley Frosdick or Hollie Welch in the UK press office:

ivi@pha-media.com / 020 7025 1374

**Notes to editors:**

* IVI was founded in 1990 as the first medical institution in Spain fully dedicated to Human Reproduction and it now has **26 clinics** in seven countries. Since its creation, IVI has helped over **90,000 children** to be born around the world.
* IVI is one of the **most prize-winning groups** in the world (winner of eight ASRM awards) and it has the most scientific publications in its field. In addition, it boasts numerous **renowned specialists** whose scientific work and clinical results have been awarded international prizes.
* IVI Fertility Facebook - <https://www.facebook.com/IVIFertilityUnitedKingdom>
* IVI Fertility Twitter - <https://twitter.com/ivifertility>