

Embryo Adoption Programme of Institut Marquès

Women from all over the world come to Spain to adopt embryos

The baby number 1000 was born thanks to the programme of Institut Marquès

The number of international adoptions of children decreases while the number of international adoptions of embryos increases

Institut Marquès Barcelona launched the embryo adoption in 2004 to give a chance at life to frozen embryos

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[Institut Marquès](#) presents the 1000th birth of its [international embryo adoption programme](#). It is a baby girl called Georgina who, with 3,500 kg. of weight, was born in the town of Essex (UK) last February. Her mother decided to adopt an embryo at Institut Marquès, a clinic in Barcelona, after having performed several cycles of assisted reproduction without success in different centres. In June, an embryo that had been frozen for years was transferred; it came from the treatment of a couple who did not answer about the destination they wanted for their embryos and they were thus left under the custody of the clinic.

Kerry Andersen, Georgina's mother, is a midwife. A 45-year-old single woman who believes that this treatment has given her **"the best of my life, which was the hope of being a mother. I am thrilled to think that my precious daughter is here thanks to the embryo adoption programme as I feel it is a very special way to enjoy motherhood. When I got to know this program, I did not hesitate to adopt an embryo"**.

Institut Marquès was pioneer in the world launching this initiative in 2004. Embryos that are not transferred remain under the custody of the clinic when the parents do not want to decide on their destination. Therefore, this centre of Barcelona decided to offer them in adoption to its patients. In accordance with Spanish law, the embryos available under this programme come from healthy parents, under the age of 35, who have successfully undergone an In-Vitro-Fertilisation treatment and who no longer want to have more children. During the 12-year life of the programme, **patients from 124 different nationalities** attended the Institut Marquès' centres. It is the clinic in the world where more embryo adoptions take place. At the moment, 117 women are expecting a baby thanks to this programme.

Dr. **Marisa López-Teijón**, Director of Institut Marquès, explains that "**the adoption of embryos was launched in 2004 to give the embryos frozen in our centre a possibility to live. From the beginning, the response has been exciting because of the social acceptance, the support offered by different groups and the enthusiasm with which women from all over the world come to us to adopt them. There are less international adoptions of children and more international adoptions of embryos. Behind each case, there is a special story, either of many failures in previous treatments or having given up the possibility of being parents**".

Double abandonment

Embryos that can be adopted come from patients who do not answer the different letters that the clinic sends over a period of four years to choose their destination. After this time, according to the Spanish law, if the couple does not answer, the embryos are placed under the custody of the centre and it is up to the latter to decide about their destination.

Despite offering all possible options, 50% of people with frozen embryos do not answer. 37% choose to keep them; 5% want them to be destroyed; 4%, to be donated to other couples; and 4%, to research.

Many patients do not answer because, in many cases, the decision raises a difficult situation that triggers emotional conflicts. The result is that many embryos remain in the clinics, which very often do not take a decision either and, hence, the embryos suffer a new abandonment.

How do frozen embryos live?

The destination the patients choose for their embryos, according to the country where they come from

According to data gathered by Institut Marquès, taking into account the country where patients come from, the **Germans** are the most responsible deciding on the future of their embryos (63.6%) and those who practically do not contemplate the option of destroying them or donating them for research.

However, 63% of **French** and 60% of **UK** patients prefer not to decide on the fate of their embryos. In **Italy**, 45% do not answer and they are the ones that more often opt for conservation (43%). **Spaniards** do not usually donate their embryos to other couples, only 3% do so, but they are the ones that more frequently donate their embryos for research (6%). Finally, 45% of **Irish** patients keep their frozen embryos for themselves and they are the ones who donate the most to other couples with 7%.

Adopters' profile

According to a study carried out by Institut Marquès, 72% of patients who request embryo adoption do so due to sterility problems (ovarian aging, severe male infertility or previous failures in reproduction techniques). They are couples who have unsuccessfully tried other treatments, with an average of more than 4 years wishing to have a baby and with 4.4 failed attempts. **61% had already given up any treatment and the idea of becoming parents**

18% of the adopters are women without a male partner who wish to be mothers and another 10% are people who go directly to the adoption of embryos because they do not consider other sterility treatments for ethical or religious reasons.

A third of all these patients had initiated administrative formalities to adopt a child.

Assignment, treatment and success rate

At Institut Marquès, embryos are assigned through a computer system that ensures that each child is born in a different country than the other embryos resulting from the same treatment. This avoids future consanguinities. Adopters accept that the only parameter to choose their embryo is the race.

Medical treatment for embryo adoption is simple and painless. The woman's uterus is prepared to receive the embryos through estrogen patches and vaginal progesterone tablets. After a few days, the uterus is ready and the embryos are thawed and transferred, requiring no hospitalization. After 14 days, the pregnancy test is performed and, from there on, it evolves like a normal gestation.

Embryo adoption does not require any formal adoption procedure, but only to sign an informed consent where the woman or couple explicitly acknowledge to have been informed about the process and to agree with it.

Throughout these 12 years, the rate of embryonic survival after thawing has been improved thanks to vitrification. The number of embryos transferred has been reduced from an average of 2.2 to 1.3. The global pregnancy average rate was 43% per cycle, which has also been improving every year. Since 2013, it is higher than 50% per cycle.

About Institut Marquès

Institut Marquès is a clinic of international reference in Gynaecology, Obstetrics and Assisted Reproduction with centres in Barcelona, Milan, London and Ireland (Dublin and Clane).

The clinic, with great experience in cases that present special difficulty, helps people from more than 50 countries achieve their dream of having a baby. Institut Marquès



offers the highest success rates of pregnancy, with 89% with their egg donation programme.

Leader in innovation, this centre develops an important line of research on the benefits of music in early life and foetal stimulation.

More information on www.institutomarques.com and www.institutmarques.ie

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