



HYGEIA GROUP



GENERAL, MATERNITY & CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL S.A.

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## PRESS RELEASE

### **Fertility hope for women with cancer!**

#### ***The first ovarian tissue bank in Greece is established at MITERA***

A very promising new method of fertility preservation for young women undergoing chemotherapy is now offered at MITERA Obstetrics/Gynecology and Pediatric Clinic. Ovarian tissues of cancer patients, removed through laparoscopy before starting chemotherapy, are cryopreserved with the aim of later retransplantation. The announcement of the first ovarian tissue bank in Greece was made at the 11<sup>th</sup> Pan-Hellenic Obstetrics & Gynecology Conference.

This bank is organized by Dr. Ioannis Zervomanolakis. As Assistant Director of the University Clinic of Gynecologic Endocrinology and Reproductive Medicine at the Innsbruck Medical University in Austria, Dr. Zervomanolakis was in charge of the Austrian ovarian tissue bank and performed the first ovarian tissue retransplantation in Austria, which is one of the first operations of this kind in the world.

“Although chemotherapy and radiation are necessary for cancer treatment, they unfortunately damage not only cancer cells but also healthy human cells, such as oocytes”, Dr. Zervomanolakis said. “Laparoscopic removal and cryopreservation of ovarian tissue is a new innovative method of fertility preservation for young women with cancer or autoimmune diseases. Seven healthy babies have already been born in the last four years worldwide as a result of this method”.

This new method offers a long-term advantage compared with oocyte freezing, as it combines fertility treatment with hormonal production by the retransplanted tissues and thus avoiding premature menopause.

The ovarian tissue bank is organized under support of the Assisted Reproduction Unit of MITERA and its embryologist Dr. Giles Palmer. This effort focuses on all young women with cancer who demand reliable consulting in their fertility needs. The bank objects to deal with the issue “Fertility after cancer” in a responsible way, so that these women will have serious hopes of having children in the future through preservation of their fertility, without neglecting their cancer treatment.