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Press Release

Fewer children will be born with Down syndrome

Fewer children will be born with Down syndrome and other congenital abnormalities (chromosomal or morphogenic), according to the latest developments in Fetal Medicine. Researchers are very close to discovering a method that will be implemented by performing a special DNA analysis from embryo cells isolated from mother's blood. Significant conclusions regarding the embryo karyotype (chromosomal composition) will then be extracted from these cells.

These were announced recently by the world famous Professor of Fetal Medicine at King's College and University College London, Kypros Nicolaides, during a lecture for "Recent Advances in Fetal Medicine", he delivered in a scientific meeting at LETO Maternity Hospital of the HYGEIA Group.

As the Professor noted, "With this method - once it is applicable in practice - we will be able to avoid, to a large extent, invasive prenatal diagnostic testing (such as amniocentesis and chorionic villus sampling/CVS), which we apply in high risk women for chromosomal anomalies (e.g. Down syndrome etc). The cornerstone of Fetal Medicine-Prenatal Diagnosis is to limit the birth of children with congenital abnormalities (chromosomal or morphogenic). This is constantly achieved with continuing medical research. At the moment, no such method applicable in practice is valid, although we are very close to it."

The President of the Scientific Committee at LETO Maternity Hospital, Dr. Elpidoforos Douratsos, noted that, "We are extremely proud about the Fetal medicine Unit in our Hospital, which is one of the most up to date and high standard Unit. All doctors working in it, are specialists, and have been trained by Professor Kypros Nicolaides at the research Unit at King's College Hospital in London directed by him. Additionally, the Alpha Lab Molecular Biology and Cytogenetics Center has the scientific background and has been developing recent methods of molecular diagnosis so will be able to deal with any new type of diagnostic method in practice which will be innovated in the near future."

The scientific lecture focused on two separate subjects. The first dealt with the progress made in choosing noninvasive early prenatal diagnosis method, during the first trimester of pregnancy. The second focused on the extensive research conducted with the aim of discovering a method of chromosomal testing using the mother's blood.

The LETO Hospital, in the 42 years of operation, has been leader in the field of ultrasound and prenatal diagnosis, taking in account the limited technology available in late 70's and 80's, in practice. This has been feasible, thanks to doctors, dedicated to this field working in LETO Hospital by that time.

LETO MATERNITY HOSPITAL S.A.