

Many lubricants not sperm friendly



K-Y Jelly, olive oil and saliva found to impair sperm motility

New Zealand's leading fertility treatment provider is backing the use of a specific personal lubricant because of its "sperm friendly" qualities.

Fertility Associates now recommends couples seeking fertility assistance use the Pre-Seed brand if they are trying to conceive by having sex and want to use a vaginal lubricant.

Fertility specialist John Peek, also the group operations manager for Fertility Associates, says in vitro research shows Pre-Seed is harmless to sperm, in contrast to other lubricant products and potential alternatives such as olive oil and saliva.

An in vitro study published

in February this year, in which semen samples were incubated with human tubal fluid media or various vaginal lubricants, found Pre-Seed was as sperm friendly as human tubal fluid (*Fertil Steril* 2008;89[2]:375-79).

After 30 minutes' incubation, sperm motility was similar in the human tubal fluid and Pre-Seed groups, but was significantly reduced in the FemGlide, Replens and Astroglide lubricant groups.

After four hours' incubation, there was a significant decline in sperm chromatin quality in the FemGlide and K-Y Jelly groups, but no significant difference in sperm chromatin quality between the human tu-

bal fluid and Pre-Seed groups.

Earlier research has shown that K-Y Jelly, olive oil and saliva – but not baby oil – impair sperm motility.

Dr Peek says Fertility Associates has been recommending Pre-Seed lubricant since it conducted a literature review of lubricant research after it was approached last year by Pre-Seed's New Zealand distributors.

Pre-Seed was approved by the US FDA two years ago as the first coital lubricant indicated for use during fertility interventions.

Manufacturer INGfertility has applied to the FDA to ask that lubricants with proven detrimental effects on sperm motility carry the information on the label. The application says the pH levels and osmolality levels of some commercially available lubricants are outside the physiological range for sperm, which can irreversibly damage sperm.

Local distributor New Zealand Medical Supplies plans to raise with Medsafe issues around the labelling of lubricants in New Zealand, where Pre-Seed is registered as a medical device.

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