Success for new embryonic genetic testing

Doctors in London have reported the first pregnancy in Europe from a new IVF procedure that checks embryos for genetic disorders before they are implanted.

The technique allows doctors to select embryos that are free of dangerous mutations carried by one or both parents even if the precise nature of the genetic defect is unknown.

Common embryo testing procedures require months of laboratory work, but the latest tool, known as karyomapping, can be completed within two weeks, meaning a couple can undergo tests without breaking from their IVF treatment cycle.

To perform the karyomapping, doctors first obtain DNA from cheek swabs of the parents and a family member affected by the disorder. The gene sequences are then compared and used to work up a genetic fingerprint for the mutation that causes the disease.

Doctors can then check the cells removed from the embryos and work out which will be affected or not by the disorder, or will be carriers that could pass it on.

Read the full, original story: IVF technique that checks embryos for genetic disorders has first success