Brussels, April 21 2004

PRESS RELEASE

First pregnancy ever obtained after autotransplantation of cryopreserved ovarian tissue

Eleven months after an ovarian tissue transplant, a young woman, cured of cancer, is pregnant.

Professor Jacques DONNEZ, Head of the Department of Gynecology and Andrology at the Cliniques Universitaires St. Luc, and his team of collaborators, have managed to achieve what no other team in the world has yet been able to do: give a young woman, who underwent cryopreservation of ovarian tissue prior to cancer treatment, the gift of pregnancy.

It is estimated that, by 2010, one in every 250 women (of reproductive age) will be cancer survivors. The lifesaving treatment they will have endured will, in many cases, have provoked early menopause and subsequent infertility. These side effects are due to the destruction of a significant proportion of ovarian follicles by chemo-and radiotherapy.

- One way of preserving fertility in these young patients is by freezing embryos obtained before their treatment, but this requires a partner and a lengthy stimulation protocol that may delay urgent cancer therapy.

- Another strategy is freezing ovarian tissue before cancer treatment. This promising technique, has the advantage of allowing chemotherapy to be started immediately, without any delay. And it is precisely this approach that Professor Jacques DONNEZ has chosen to develop for his patients.

The programme was initiated in 1977. A 25-year-old patient presenting with stage IV Hodgkin’s lymphoma was to undergo chemo-and radiotherapy. She thus became one of the first patients in whom the technique of ovarian tissue cryopreservation was applied. In February 2003, the patient underwent the procedure of autotransplantation of ovarian tissue, after having been declared disease-free. In June 2003, this patient found herself not only cured of cancer but with restored ovarian function thanks to the ovarian tissue graft which had been taken before her treatment. These extremely encouraging results were presented at the « First World Congress on Ovarian Cryopreservation and Ovarian Transplantation », last June.
In January 2004, eleven months after transplantation, Professor Donnez’s team had their next breakthrough: the patient’s pregnancy test was positive.
In April 2004, scans confirmed an ongoing pregnancy (currently 15 weeks) with an embryo developing well and following the normal growth curve. Indeed, **this is the first pregnancy ever obtained after autotransplantation of cryopreserved ovarian tissue**.

In order to let you have more information on this unprecedented event, it is our pleasure to invite you to a **press conference**, which will be held on

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<th>Monday, April 26 at 15.30</th>
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<td>At the Cliniques Universitaires St. Luc (in the “Verrière”)</td>
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<td>Avenue Hippocrate 10</td>
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<td>1200 Brussels</td>
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Various videos sequences relating to different procedures (retrieval and transplantation of ovarian tissue) will be shown to illustrate Professor Donnez’s subject matter.

Looking forward to seeing you on Monday, April 26.

Please complete the attached form.
Brussels, April 21 2004

Please fill in and send to:
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xaviere.lucas@clin.ucl.ac.be

Press Conference

Frist preganancy ever obtained after autotransplantation
of cryopreserved ovarian tissue

Monday, April 26, 2004 at 15:30 at the Cliniques Universitaires St. Luc

The conference will be held in the « Verrière », next to the main entrance to the hospital:

Mr / Mrs / Ms ..............
From (media) ..............

• Will attend the conference....
• Will not attend the conference...
• Wishes to receive the press dossier ....

Please confirm your participation by Friday, April 23, 2004, at the latest.

Regards,
Xavière Lucas