

KISSING GOODBYE TO THE MOUTH PIPETTE

SUSAN ALLEN, HEATHER MEEK, EMMA RUSH, SHREEYA PARMAR, STEPHANIE DOLLING AND MARTIN FRAY

Mary Lyon Centre, MRC-Harwell Institute, Harwell Campus, Oxfordshire, OX 11 ORD, UK

Mouth pipetting has persisted as the standard technique for handling pre-implantation embryos in a large number of non-clinical laboratories. The convenience of the technique is undeniable but it remains the elephant in the room when it comes to health and safety inspections. As the only hand to mouth procedure tolerated in the modern laboratory, many laboratories are looking around for viable alternatives. Here we describe our experience of using Eppendorf CellTram manual micromanipulators for general embryo handling and EZ-Grip positive displacement pipettes for surgical embryo transfers in the mouse.

The preliminary data are very promising and on average we are recording a 74.6% pregnancy rate for embryo transfers using the EZ Grip, compared to 95.8% for the mouth pipette. Plus a 32% birth rate for EZ Grip compared to 41.5% for mouth pipette. We anticipate making further progress as the technical staff become more familiar with the procedures.