

Perspectives and Editorials: Letter to the Editor

Response: Seasonal Variation and Age-Related Changes in Human Semen Parameters

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To the Editor:

We thank Drs. Mendeluk and Curi for their letter regarding our recently published article, "Seasonal Variation and Age-Related Changes in Human Semen Parameters." It is interesting that they also found seasonal variations in Buenos Aires, Argentina, with sperm concentrations highest during winter. In their letter, they raise relevant issues regarding the use of computer aided sperm analysis (CASA), and they discuss factors that may account for variability in semen quality.

In our study, CASA HTM-IVOS (a computer-aided semen analyzer) was used for semen analyses. We agree that the use of different methodologies for semen analyses may account for differences in results across studies. With the aim of improving the ability to compare our data with those of other studies, we have recently incorporated World Health Organization methods of semen analysis.

We agree that many factors, in addition to ambient temperature and photoperiod, may play a role in seasonal variations in semen quality. To explore this further, we are presently conducting a large study on the relationship between environmental agents and semen quality. We are collecting information on lifestyle factors, such as alcohol and drug use, environmental and occupational exposures, and personal factors such as stress. As was suggested by Drs. Mendeluk and Curi, this information will allow us to further explore the risk factors for altered semen quality.

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