

Hebrew University Medical School / Hadassah Hospital

With the help of the Jewish Medical Association (JMA) UK, I spent my medical elective at the Hebrew University Medical School / Hadassah Hospital, undertaking research into infertility in the laboratory of Dr Ariel Revel and Prof Reuven Revel. Despite my negligible knowledge of Hebrew, and relative research inexperience the laboratory team were hugely welcoming, and made every effort to ensure the research was both of relevance and of interest to me.

During my time with the group I wrote a review on a newly described molecular link between the invading embryo and invasive cancer, and I did the benchwork for a project which aimed to characterise differences in miRNA expression between fertile women and women who had repeatedly failed in vitro fertilisation. The results look very promising, with an apparently significant difference between the two groups; and the experience of being thrown into the Israeli medical research world was fantastic.

Research in Israel, like in the UK, has its difficulties, but the challenges in Israel are different – due to cultural and religious reasons, as well as to the structure of the Israeli health system. I would encourage British medical students unreservedly to consider an elective in Israel: it is fairly easy to organise, especially with the help of JMA (UK) contacts; the medical system is sufficiently similar to that of the UK; and the language barriers are really not an issue.

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