

If you are considering being a sperm donor, this fact sheet will give you an overview of what is involved, outline some of the issues you should consider, and help you decide if sperm donation is for you.

## THE FACTS ABOUT:

# Sperm donation

Thank you for considering donating sperm to help another couple or single woman to get pregnant. At Life Fertility Clinic we will do all we can to answer your questions and help make this process straightforward for you, but please understand the preparations are quite time-consuming as we need to protect you and the people who will receive your sperm.

## Who benefits from donated sperm?

Donated sperm helps people realise their dream of having a family in a number of different situations including where:

- The man cannot produce suitable sperm himself.
- The man carries a genetic disorder that he does not want to pass on to his children.
- Repeated IVF attempts have failed and problems with the sperm are suspected.
- A single woman wants a child.
- Same sex female couples want a child.

## Who can be a donor?

It is incredibly generous of you to consider donating your sperm but we hope you understand that, in order to protect everyone involved (you the donor, the potential future parents and any resulting children), it's important for us to be careful in accepting donors.

To be a sperm donor for Life Fertility Clinic, you must:

- Be aged between 21 and 50.
- Produce semen with characteristics that fall within normal ranges.
- Be prepared to produce a number of semen samples if needed.
- Be able to give a full medical history and know your own biological origins if you are an adoptee.
- Be able to produce formal photo identification such as a Medicare card, driver's license or passport.

- Attend a consultation with a Life Fertility Clinic doctor where your personal, medical and reproductive history will be reviewed.

Once all your initial screenings, questionnaires, counselling and consents have been completed, the doctor will give final medical clearance for donation.

- Attend an education session with our IVF Nurse Coordinator and complete questionnaires on lifestyle, family and medical history in order to rule out the possibility of passing on an inherited condition or transmissible infection.
- Attend at least two counselling sessions with our counsellor (with your partner, if you have one) to make sure you have fully explored what this may mean for you.
- If you know the person(s) that you are donating to, you will also need to have a joint counselling session with them.
- Be screened for a range of infectious diseases including HIV, Hepatitis B and C, HTLV 1 and 2, syphilis and gonorrhoea.
- Be screened for cystic fibrosis, karyotype, blood group and any genetic conditions prevalent in your racial group
- Have repeat blood tests for infectious diseases six months after the first tests.
- Consent to Life Fertility Clinic contacting other clinics to verify your donation history if you have one.
- Consent to sperm donation and to Life Fertility Clinic storing identifying details and non-identifying details about you on our donor register
- Agree to your identifying information being released to any children conceived using your sperm when they reach 18 years old, if they request to know.
- Have consent to your donation from your partner if you are married or in a de facto relationship.

## Can I donate for someone I know?

Yes, you can donate specifically to help someone you know.

In fact this is the only option at Life Fertility Clinic as we do not manage our own anonymous donor sperm bank.



## Is there a payment for sperm donation?

No. In Australia it is illegal to receive payment for sperm donation. If you are making a donation for someone you know, they can choose to cover your reasonable expenses associated with the donation.

## What are my legal rights?

You can change or withdraw your consent to be a donor at any time up to the time of insemination or fertilisation of the woman's eggs.

Once insemination or fertilisation has occurred, any embryos or babies that result from your donation legally belong to the person or couple who received your sperm. They have full responsibility and rights for the embryo(s), through the pregnancy and through the child's life. Their name(s) will appear on the birth certificate.

At the time of donation you will though be asked to consider how you feel about the recipients of your sperm donating embryos that were created using your sperm to someone else in the future. As this could potentially result in additional families being created using your sperm, you are entitled to tell us whether you want the recipient to have this option.

When a child conceived using your sperm reaches 18 years old, they are entitled to ask Life Fertility Clinic for your identifying details and may try to trace you for medical or other reasons. The information we will release will be that which we were given at the time of donation and may include name, date of birth, address and medical history.

If we are contacted we will endeavour to let you know that we have received this request and will be releasing information about you.

You may also ask for non-identifying details of who has received your sperm and the number and gender of any children born.

## What details are kept on the donor register?

Life Fertility Clinic keeps a record of all sperm donors. On our donor register we will record your name, contact details and profile details. We also record any children that you have had of your own, and previous donations and babies born as a result of your donation with us. We use this information to limit the number of families that are created.

It is a licensing requirement for us that the number of families created from any sperm donor is appropriately limited. For both known and anonymous sperm donors, it is Life Fertility Clinic policy that all sperm donors should, wherever possible, be limited being used to create no more than a total of 5 families (in Queensland) including their own.

## Why do I need counselling before donating?

The two compulsory counselling sessions give you (and your partner if you have one) a chance to explore whether sperm donation is for you. They also give us a chance to get to know you and make sure you fully understand your rights and the situations that could arise in future as a result of your donation. Most sperm donors appreciate the opportunity to talk through what they are planning and how this may affect their life now and in the future. As the recipient of your sperm is known to you, you will be required to have a joint counselling session with them as well.

You can decide not to go ahead as a result of these sessions or we may decide not to accept your donation if we have any concerns.

There is a minimum 2 week cooling off period once everything is in place, before treatment can commence.

## What happens when I visit the clinic to donate sperm?

Once all your initial consultations and screenings are complete, you will be given instructions for producing your semen sample.

Normally this is done in a private room at Life Fertility Clinic but you may be able bring a fresh sample from home if you are within an hour's travel distance.

Your first sample is used for assessment and, if it is within normal ranges, you may be asked to return and give a number of further samples. The exact number depends on how many cycles we estimate the recipient may need to get pregnant.

Once we receive your semen samples, they are frozen and quarantined for six months. After that time you will be asked to repeat certain blood tests to ensure there is no chance of passing on a disease that wasn't visible in the first tests.

Once we have this clearance and all of your counselling and consents are complete, your samples can be used for treatment.

## How is the sperm used?

Your sperm may be used for intrauterine insemination (placed directly in the woman's uterus) or for IVF treatment where it is mixed with the woman's eggs in the laboratory to fertilise them. The resulting embryos are then grown in the laboratory for between 2 and 6 days before one is selected to implant in the woman's uterus.

If your sperm is used in IVF, there may be more than one viable embryo that results and any embryos not immediately transferred to the woman's uterus may be frozen for her future use.

If you would like to understand more about the procedures for those who receive sperm, please see our *Treatment with donated sperm* fact sheet.



## Next steps

If you think you would like to help friends, family, or another couple by being a sperm donor, these are the steps:

- Get a referral letter from your GP.
- Make an appointment for a consultation with a Life Fertility Clinic Specialist.
- Attend a compulsory one-hour education session with our Nurse Coordinator.
- Have blood and other screening tests, complete medical and lifestyle questionnaires and consent forms.
- Produce an initial semen sample for testing.
- Produce the requested number of semen samples at our clinic – the number will depend on the likely number of treatment cycles the couple will need.
- Attend a minimum of two counselling session with our counsellor (your partner must also attend) and a joint counselling session with the person (couple) who will be receiving your sperm.
- Wait while the semen is quarantined for 180 days.
- Repeat your screening blood tests
- If all tests are clear, and the doctor gives final medical clearance, the recipient can start treatment.

## Support groups

### **Australian Donor Conception Network**

Email: [donorconceptionnetwork@gmail.com](mailto:donorconceptionnetwork@gmail.com)

Website: [www.australiandonorconceptionnetwork.org](http://www.australiandonorconceptionnetwork.org)

The Australian Donor Conception Network is a self-funding organisation run by volunteers and has been in existence since 1993. The membership is made up of people considering or using donor sperm, egg or embryos, those who already have children conceived on donor programs, adult donor offspring and donors.

The Australian Donor Conception Network provides support, help and research assistance.

### **Access**

Email: [info@access.org.au](mailto:info@access.org.au)

Website: [www.access.org.au](http://www.access.org.au)

Access is a consumer based, independent, non profit organisation committed to being a national voice in promoting the wellbeing and welfare of infertile people of all ages.

## Contact Life Fertility Clinic

The friendly and professional team at Life Fertility Clinic are keen to answer any questions about our sperm donor program.

**THANK YOU FOR CONSIDERING BEING A SPERM DONOR. IT COULD MEAN THE WORLD TO SOMEONE.**