

## Making Family Real

The ways in which families are created are as varied as the potential parents. Many of our patients decide to or need to create their family using donated sperm. This fact sheet explains the options, considerations and treatment processes involved.



### THE FACTS ABOUT:

## Treatment with donated sperm

### Getting started

If you (and your partner, if you have one) are interested in having treatment using donated sperm, this is an outline of some of the preliminary steps that will be involved:

You will need a referral from your GP if you are not already a patient of Life Fertility Clinic.

You should make an appointment for a consultation with a Life Fertility Clinic specialist who will review your history and recommend treatment that is best suited to your circumstances.

You should attend an education session with our Nurse Coordinator who will outline your donor options, arrange any blood tests and go through any consent forms with you.

You should attend a minimum of two counselling sessions (mandatory) to discuss the implications of being a recipient of donor sperm.

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

### Donor options

If you know someone who is willing to donate sperm for you, we can arrange everything for you and your donor. Your donor will also need to have a consultation with one of our fertility specialists and to attend a nurse education session. This session can be combined with yours or at a separate appointment. The donor (and his partner if he has one) will also need to have two counselling sessions and you will all need to attend an additional joint counselling session.

*A separate fact sheet is available outlining the process of being a sperm donor for someone that you know.*

Life Fertility Clinic also has a register of anonymous sperm donors that are sourced from a commercial donor bank. If this is an option that you would like to explore, we can give you donor profiles to choose from when you attend your nurse education session.

The donor profiles include non-identifying information such as physical characteristics, photographs as an adult and child, family and medical history, lifestyle, education and personality profiles.

When you are ready and have decided on your donor, you can reserve one or two samples for use in your treatment.

### Counselling

The two compulsory counselling sessions give you (and your partner if you have one) a chance to explore whether being a recipient of donated sperm 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 treatment.

Most recipients appreciate the opportunity to talk through their decisions and how this may affect their life and that of their family now and in the future.

If you know your sperm donor, you will also need to have a joint counselling session with them.

You can decide not to go ahead as a result of these sessions or, if we have any concerns, we may suggest you defer or do not go ahead with treatment.

### Legal issues

A sperm donor can change or withdraw their consent to be a donor at any time up to the time of insemination of the woman or fertilisation of the woman's eggs in the laboratory. Once this point in treatment has been reached, all rights and responsibilities for any embryos created, any pregnancies, or any legal responsibilities for any child born, lie with you (and your partner).

At the time of donation though, a known donor will be asked whether he is happy for you to donate your embryos (created using his sperm) to someone else should they remain in storage when you have completed your treatment. This is because donation of these embryos could result in further families being created from his sperm. You will be informed of his consent about this and can decide not to accept the donation if needs be.



As a recipient of donated sperm, regardless of whether the donor is known to you or not, you (and your partner with whom you undertook treatment) are the legal parent(s) of any child born as a result of the treatment. You (and your partner) are named on the child's birth certificate.

All sperm donors must consent to their identifying information being held with Life Fertility Clinic. When a child conceived using donor sperm reaches 18 years old, he/she is entitled to ask Life Fertility Clinic for the donor's identifying details.

The donor may also ask for non-identifying details about who has received his sperm and the number and gender of any children born.

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 are limited wherever possible to creating no more than 5 families (in Queensland) including their own.

## Do I need to pay my donor?

No. In Australia it is illegal to receive payment for sperm donation. If someone you know is donating sperm for you, you may elect to cover their reasonable expenses associated with the donation.

## Treatment options – intrauterine insemination or IVF?

When you use donated sperm, you have the choice of having the sperm placed directly in the uterus (intrauterine insemination or IUI) or using it for an IVF cycle.

Your fertility specialist will advise you on which treatment approach is best suited to you.

### IUI

IUI is a straightforward first treatment option for many patients, which can be used in combination with ovulation induction, however, it is not appropriate if there are problems with the woman's fallopian tubes.

In outline, the woman's cycle is monitored by the doctor by ultrasound. and the frozen donor sperm sample is processed in the laboratory to extract and concentrate the sperm before inserting it in the uterus at the time of ovulation (when the eggs are released from the ovary).

*Separate fact sheets are available about IUI and ovulation induction.*

### IVF

When donated sperm is used in IVF treatment, the frozen donor sperm is thawed and processed on the day that the woman's eggs are retrieved. The prepared donor sperm are used to inseminate the eggs by standard IVF or ICSI. All other aspects of the IVF treatment process are the same as when partner sperm is used, including embryo cryopreservation.

*Separate fact sheets are available about IVF, ICSI and Freezing.*

## Brothers and sisters

We are sure that, once you are pregnant, further treatment will be the last thing on your mind! However so that you can keep your family options open for the future, we will get in touch to explain your options to reserve 'sibling' samples for future treatment. Supplies of donor samples are not always available indefinitely so reserving a few samples of the same donor can be a good idea if you think there is a possibility that you might want to have further children in the future using that same donor.

## 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.

### 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 eager to help and answer any questions about our donor program.