

IN THE KNOW



Family-Building Options for LGBTQ Couples



BECOMING A PARENT WHEN YOU'RE LGBTQ

Starting a family can be daunting when natural conception isn't possible, but there's good news: LGBTQ couples can have children, and are doing so in increasing numbers. In fact, LGBTQ moms and dads are proud parents to as many as nine million children in the United States.

When you've decided you are ready to grow your family, having realistic expectations can give you peace of mind. Even if you and your partner don't have fertility issues, you'll most likely consider the use of reproductive technologies. It's important to have patience—the process can take time and may require numerous attempts.

As you move forward, you'll need knowledge of what to expect during your family-building journey. The following pages explore the obstacles unique to LGBTQ couples and will help you understand the options available to help you achieve parenthood.

DID YOU KNOW

77%

of LGBTQ adults
under 35 are either
already parents
or considering children,
a 44% increase over the
previous generation

SEEKING **HELP**

Talking to a doctor is the first step toward starting your family. Before making an appointment with a clinic, you'll want to confirm it offers relevant options for LGBTQ couples.

At your first appointment, you may speak to doctors that specialize in fertility, such as:

- Reproductive endocrinologists, who treat female and male reproductive issues and can offer a full range of options
- Urologists or andrologists, who specialize in the male reproductive system and urological disorders

You may find it helpful to discuss treatment preferences with your partner before your first visit.

CONSIDER IF YOU AND YOUR PARTNER WILL BE TESTED FOR FERTILITY ISSUES, PLUS:

- Will one of you be providing the egg?
- Where will you get the sperm?
- **?** Who's going to carry the baby?
- Will one of you contribute the sperm?
- Where will you get the egg?
- Where will you find a surrogate?

QUESTIONS FOR YOUR DOCTOR

It's a good idea to organize your thoughts before each appointment to ensure you get the most out of your visits. Prepare questions in advance, and remember not to be shy—if you don't understand your doctor's answers, don't hesitate to ask for a better explanation.





Want guidance on what to ask your doctor? Visit Fertility.com or scan the QR code

FAMILY-BUILDING TREATMENT OPTIONS

LGBTQ fertility treatment options have expanded in recent years, allowing more couples to start or build a family than ever before. For some couples, options ultimately depend on age, health, and the desire to carry a child. For others, the path forward will depend on sperm quality, surrogacy options, and finances.

FERTILITY TREATMENT OPTIONS

Ovulation induction to help mature eggs develop and be released during ovulation; used in conjunction with IUI or IVF

IUI, the insertion of sperm directly into the uterus near the time of ovulation

IVF, the fertilization of eggs with sperm in a laboratory to create embryos, which can then be transferred into the uterus

Reciprocal IVF using the eggs of one partner and the womb of the other

ICSI, the injection of a single sperm into each egg during IVF

Third-party reproduction, the use of donated eggs, sperm, or embryos

Traditional surrogacy, the use of IUI to achieve conception using the surrogate's eggs

Gestational surrogacy, the use of IVF to create embryos that are then transferred to the surrogate's uterus; the surrogate will not have a genetic link to the child

Remember that success rates and risk factors vary between treatments. It's a good idea to talk to your doctor about what to expect before moving forward.

IUI: intrauterine insemination. | IVF: in-vitro fertilization. | ICSI: intracytoplasmic sperm injection.

OTHER PATHS TO PARENTHOOD

ADOPTION

Some LGBTQ couples consider adoption in lieu of treatment—an alternative that can be life changing for children and parents alike. Options vary depending on parenting laws in your state, but may include working directly with:

- a baby's birth parents (independent adoption)
- an agency (agency adoption)
- a public child welfare system (state or public agency adoption)
- · another country (international adoption)



More information on adoption can be found at resolve.org.

FERTILITY PRESERVATION

Cryopreservation, also known as "freezing," involves storing sperm, eggs, or embryos at very low temperatures so they can be thawed and used later. Fertility preservation is a good option for those who want to plan for a family in the future, including transgender men and women who wish to surgically transition.

GETTING THROUGH THE STRESS

Trying to start a family can be stressful. Use these tips to help get you through the tough times:



Take control by educating yourself and asking your doctor questions



Have a conversation about your feelings with your partner, family, and friends



Get support from groups, counselors, or organizations



Visit Fertility.com or scan the QR code for more LGBTQ family-building facts

PAYING FOR FERTILITY TREATMENT

The cost of fertility services can vary widely, and advanced treatments, donors, or surrogates can add significant costs above what is normally incurred. The good news is that there are many ways to help make treatment more financially accessible.

INSURANCE COVERAGE

If you've heard that insurance doesn't usually cover infertility treatments, that's changing. Many companies are recognizing the importance of fertility assistance and choosing plans that include treatment benefits.

SAVINGS PROGRAMS

Some fertility drug manufacturers offer savings programs to help make treatment more affordable. Program information can usually be found on the drug manufacturer's website.

FINANCING OPTIONS

From nonprofit organizations to special grants for LGBTQ applicants, there are many options available to help you finance treatment.

- S CLINIC PAYMENT PLANS
- S INFERTILITY LOAN PROGRAMS
- S GRANTS AND SCHOLARSHIPS
- S EMPLOYER MEDICAL ACCOUNTS
- S HOME EQUITY LOANS
 AND TAX DEDUCTIONS

LEARN MORE ABOUT LGBTQ FAMILY BUILDING



Family Equality Council family equality.org

RESOLVE resolve.org

Men Having Babies *menhavingbabies.org*

OTHER ASPECTS TO CONSIDER

Even if you think you have everything covered, it's a good idea to consult an attorney when using donor eggs, donor sperm, or a surrogate. Qualified professionals can help you navigate the emotional and legal issues that LGBTQ couples face when starting a family.

Your attorney will help you draft a contract that defines parental roles and co-parenting arrangements, if needed. Laws regarding parental rights vary from state to state, so it's important to evaluate your state's landscape fully before making decisions regarding surrogacy or donation.





Visit Fertility.com or scan the QR code for more on surrogacy and donor laws

MY FERTILITY STORY IS AVAILABLE 24/7

Helpful information is always accessible at Fertility.com

Find family-building resources, guides to prepare for appointments, and stories from others like you.





MY fertility STORY



Visit Fertility.com or scan the QR code for more support on your path to parenthood

