



MY *fertility* STORY

IN THE KNOW



Freezing Your Eggs, Sperm,
or Embryos for the Future



PRESERVING YOUR FERTILITY FOR FUTURE FAMILY BUILDING

There are many reasons why you might want to consider fertility preservation. Perhaps you haven't yet met the person you want to build a family with. Or you're focused on another important part of your life, like your education or career. Maybe you're undergoing medical treatments or being deployed overseas, and you want peace of mind knowing the option is available if needed.

Whatever the reason, freezing your healthy eggs, sperm, or embryos may be a good option if you're not ready for children now, but may want them in the future. The information in this brochure is designed to help you be "in the know" about how

cryopreservation works, what to expect from the fertility preservation process, and the payment options available to you.

DID YOU KNOW

20% of women
in the United States
now have their first
child after age 35

UNDERSTANDING CRYOPRESERVATION

The process of freezing eggs, embryos, and sperm is called cryopreservation. Today, most labs use a technique called vitrification, which avoids the risk of ice crystals forming. This can help protect eggs, embryos, and sperm from damage until you are ready to use them in the future.

HOW DOES VITRIFICATION WORK?



Living cells are mixed with a special cryoprotectant solution



They are immersed in **liquid nitrogen**



Cells become frozen into a **glass-like state**

QUESTIONS FOR YOUR FACILITY



Some labs may use different freezing methods. Before choosing a facility, ask about their cryopreservation process and success rates. Prepare questions before your visit, and don't hesitate to ask for a better explanation if you don't understand the answers you receive.



*Want guidance on what to ask your facility?
Visit [Fertility.com](https://www.fertility.com) or scan the QR code*

HOW EGG AND EMBRYO FREEZING WORKS

To freeze eggs or embryos, you'll go through a process called in-vitro fertilization (IVF), during which your body will be stimulated to produce multiple eggs.

1 TESTING AND ASSESSMENTS

Your doctor may conduct ultrasounds and blood work to assess current fertility, including egg quantity and quality.

2 HORMONAL THERAPY

You'll take injectable fertility medications to stimulate your ovaries to produce multiple eggs.

3 EGG RETRIEVAL

Your doctor will give you an injection to trigger egg maturation and then retrieve your eggs using a needle and ultrasound guidance.

4 FERTILIZATION

If you're preserving embryos, your eggs will be fertilized in the lab using sperm from your male partner or a sperm donor.

5 FREEZING AND STORAGE

Your eggs or embryos will be frozen for future use and stored in small devices in a liquid nitrogen storage tank.

DID YOU KNOW

Egg freezing is growing in popularity, with 10,936 fertility preservation cycles being performed in 2017—an increase of 24% over the previous year

Egg and embryo cryopreservation can take less than a month to complete. Some women may need to undergo more than one freezing cycle to retrieve an adequate number of eggs. Your doctor can help determine the estimated number needed.

SUCCESS RATES

THE SUCCESS OF IVF USING FROZEN EGGS AND EMBRYOS DEPENDS ON MANY FACTORS, INCLUDING:



Your age and reproductive health at the time of cryopreservation



Variables during the IVF process, such as the quality of sperm used to fertilize the egg and the health of your uterus at transfer



How well the eggs or embryos survive the thawing process

While egg freezing has seen many improvements over the past decade, pregnancy rates are still higher with frozen embryos than with frozen eggs.

YOUR NEXT STEPS

The length of time a clinic will store your eggs or embryos varies. You and your doctor will discuss storage time and plans should you elect not to use them.



When you're ready to become pregnant, your eggs or embryos will be thawed. Frozen eggs will be fertilized in a lab with sperm from your male partner or donor before being transferred into your uterus. If you've frozen embryos, they will be transferred right away.

IVF: in vitro fertilization.



Visit [Fertility.com](https://www.fertility.com) or scan the QR code for more on egg and embryo freezing

HOW SPERM FREEZING WORKS

The freezing and storage of a semen sample, often referred to as sperm banking, is the most common way for men to preserve their fertility. Unlike the process women undergo to freeze eggs or embryos, sperm freezing is quick and easy, widely available, and inexpensive.

1 SAMPLE COLLECTION

You'll be asked to masturbate into a sterile container provided by the clinic or sperm bank.

2 SEMEN ANALYSIS

Your semen will be washed and analyzed for sperm count, motility (the sperm's ability to swim), and shape.

3 PREPARATION

Prior to freezing, your sperm will be mixed with a special fluid to protect it from damage, and divided between several containers. This will allow you to thaw smaller batches of sperm at different times in the future.

4 FREEZING AND STORAGE

Your samples will be frozen for future use in a liquid nitrogen storage tank.

✓ SUCCESS RATES

Using frozen sperm for fertility treatment has been shown to be just as successful as using fresh samples. Sperm stored for more than 20 years has been used successfully.

→ YOUR NEXT STEPS

You and your doctor will discuss storage time and plans should you decide not to use your samples. When you're ready, the cells are warmed and prepared for the next phase of your fertility journey.

PAYING FOR FERTILITY PRESERVATION

The cost to bank and store eggs, embryos, or sperm for future use can vary widely depending on the type of freezing, facility, and location. The good news is that there are ways to help make fertility preservation more financially accessible.

Many companies now offer insurance coverage for fertility preservation. Check with your employer's human resources department to see if your company is one of them.

THERE ARE OTHER OPTIONS THAT CAN MAKE FERTILITY PRESERVATION AFFORDABLE, INCLUDING:

- 💰 Clinic payment plans and discounts
- 💰 Medication discounts for those without insurance benefits
- 💰 A grant, which won't need to be repaid



Visit [Fertility.com](https://www.fertility.com) or scan the QR code for more about fertility preservation costs

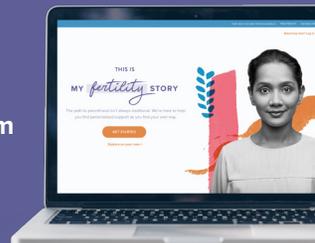


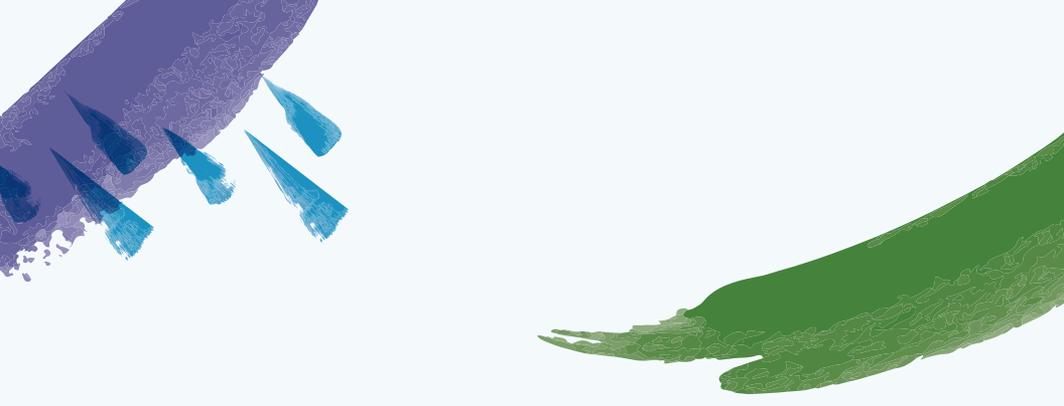
Visit [Fertility.com](https://www.fertility.com) or scan the QR code for more sperm freezing details

MY FERTILITY STORY IS AVAILABLE 24/7

Helpful information is always accessible at [Fertility.com](https://www.fertility.com)

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





MY *fertility* STORY



Visit [Fertility.com](https://www.fertility.com) or scan the QR code for more support on your path to parenthood

**EMD
SERONO**

©2021 Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany or its affiliates. All rights reserved.
EMD Serono is the Healthcare business of Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany
in the U.S. and Canada. US-NONF-00126 05/21