

Known Donor Sperm Donation *Information for Donors and Recipients*

Background

This document provides information on the sperm donation program offered at Westmead Fertility Centre and answers some of the questions commonly raised.

Westmead Fertility Centre only offers 'known' donation, whereby the donor and recipient are known to one another. Westmead Fertility Centre does not locate a donor for a recipient or vice versa.

To comply with legislation and governing bodies and ensure the safety and well being of all individuals involved, Westmead Fertility Centre has a detailed and systematic sperm donation program (outlined in the flowchart below). Sperm donation is a complex process with various social, emotional and medical implications. At Westmead Fertility Centre, support is available along the donation journey. Your questions are welcomed at any time and we will endeavour to explain each step of the process.

It is important that all parties involved (including the partners, if applicable) are equally agreeable to participation in the donor program. Counselling sessions and Fertility Specialist consultations will promote openness and honesty and explore the implications for those directly involved in the donation as well as for the family unit and child(ren) born.

It is important to consider when embarking on the donor program that the process takes time and there are no guarantees of donation completion or success. Both the donor and recipient will need to attend Westmead Fertility Centre for various appointments and commitments, generally including three Fertility Specialist consultations for the donor alone.

How will the donated sperm be used?

Donated sperm will be frozen for a mandatory three-month quarantine period (following which the donor is re-screened for infectious diseases) to minimise the risk of disease transmission. Once cleared for use following the quarantine period, donor sperm may be used in an 'intra-uterine insemination' treatment cycle where the sperm is injected directly into the uterus of the recipient woman at the time of ovulation. Or, if necessary, the recipient may have an egg collection cycle with the collected eggs being fertilised in the laboratory using the donor sperm. Depending on the individual treatment cycle, successfully fertilised eggs (embryos) may be transferred either in the same cycle as the egg collection or they may be frozen and transferred in a later frozen embryo transfer cycle.

Westmead Fertility Centre Sperm Donation Process Outline

DONOR COORDINATOR

Once the recipient/s have found a sperm donor, they and the donor will have a phone appointment with WFC's Donor Coordinator to discuss the overall process. The sperm donor will then have a seminal fluid analysis (check only – not for freezing) and infectious screening blood test in preparation for the Fertility Specialist consult.



DONOR's FERTILITY SPECIALIST CONSULT

Providing the donor has sufficient sperm, they will then see the Fertility Specialist who will further explain the process and answer any questions. Health questionnaire, donor information and medical history will be completed and infectious screening blood test results reviewed and explained.



INDIVIDUAL COUNSELLING SESSIONS

Both the donor and recipient/s will have an individual counselling session to discuss the implications of sperm donation. Partners, if applicable, must be present for these sessions.



GENETIC COUNSELLING/TESTING

Both the donor and recipient will see WFC's affiliated genetic counsellor to discuss family history. Both the donor and recipient are encouraged to gather information about their family history prior to this appointment. The recipient will then undergo genetic testing. The process of genetic testing and the implications of a positive result for the recipient and their family (if applicable) will be thoroughly discussed. If the recipient is a carrier for a genetic condition, the donor may also need to be screened.



JOINT COUNSELLING SESSION

Both the donor and recipient/s will have a joint counselling session prior to any consents being signed. Partners, if applicable, must be present for this session. All parties are encouraged to be open and honest and discuss and confirm their willingness and desire to partake in the donation.



FINAL FERTILITY SPECIALIST CONSULT

Both the donor and recipient/s will have a final medical consultation to discuss all results, sign consents and finalise preparation for treatment. The donor will then proceed to WFC's andrology laboratory to commence the sperm donation.



SPERM DONATION

The sperm donor will produce up to three sperm samples for freezing. At each sperm donation, the donor will need to provide a urine sample for infectious disease screening.



TREATMENT

Three months following sperm collection, the donor will have a final blood test to complete the quarantine period. If the sperm is cleared, the recipient may proceed to their relevant treatment cycle. The recipient will have a blood test for the same panel as the donor prior to receiving the donated sperm or embryos created using the donated sperm.

Matters to be considered before donating or receiving sperm:

Before committing yourself to treatment, here are some questions you may want to consider.

- What is the current status of the law regarding the donation of sperm?
- Who are the legal parents of the child?
- Are records kept of the donor and recipient?
- How do you feel knowing that the child would be able to have access to identifying information about the donor at the age of eighteen?
- How many times can a donor donate?
- Can you donate sperm directly to your friend or relative?
- Will you tell the child born about their biological origin? Will you tell others?
- Am I willing to undergo extensive testing that may reveal something about myself I did not know?

NSW Ministry of Health Central ART Register:

Since the introduction of the NSW Central Register in 2010, the birth of any child conceived using donor sperm must be recorded on the Central Register, in addition to certain identifying information about the donor and recipient. A donor-conceived child can access their donor's identifying information from the Register once they reach 18 years of age.

Details lodged with the Central ART Register include:

- The full name, gender and date of birth of each child born as a result of the donation.
- The full name of the woman who gave birth to the child.
- Information about the donor, including:
 - Full name;
 - Residential address;
 - Date and place of birth;
 - Ethnicity and physical characteristics;
 - Medical histories and any genetic test results that are relevant to the future health of the recipient and any child (and any descendants of the child);
 - Sex and year of birth of other child(ren) arising from the donation;

- Name of each ART provider who has previously obtained donated sperm from the donor and the date on which the sperm were obtained.

All sperm donors are asked to consent to this identifying information being placed on the Central Register. If they do not consent, donation cannot proceed.

Recipients and donors are able to access non-identifying information about the donor and any children (respectively), however open exchange of information between all parties is encouraged and this will be discussed further in counselling sessions.

Further Regulatory Framework:

- Legislation in NSW declares that any child conceived by donated sperm is the legal child of the couple who have both consented to the procedure of receiving donated sperm. Therefore, the partner of the sperm recipient has all the rights and duties of responsibility as if the child was their natural child. The donor has no legal or financial obligations to any child(ren) born as result of the donation.
- All parties are free to modify or revoke their consent at any time up until the embryo has been created using the donated sperm or the donated sperm has been placed inside the uterus of the woman.
- Sperm donation must be altruistic – this means that it is against the law for a recipient to give (or the sperm donor to receive) any direct or indirect inducements for the donation. The reimbursement of reasonable associated out-of-pocket expenses is allowed. The counsellor will document the reason for donation to determine that the donor has not been coerced into donating his sperm.
- Westmead Fertility Centre cannot provide treatment if it is likely to result in children of the donor being born to more than five women (whether or not as a result of ART treatment).
- The donor must not be a close genetic family member of the recipient.
- Any embryos created using the donated sperm cannot be used more than 15 years from the time the sperm were obtained.
- Before donation, donors are asked to stipulate whether they consent to the use of embryos resulting from their donation being used in the event of their death. Even where this consent has been obtained, if the embryos have been stored longer than

five years, before they can be thawed it is necessary to ascertain if the donor is no longer alive, and inform the recipient of this. If the donor is deceased and has not consented to the use of the embryos in the event of his death, the embryo storage must be terminated.

- Both the sperm donor and recipients must have at least one individual counselling session and one joint counselling session prior to the donation consents being signed. Partners, if applicable, must be present for these counselling sessions.
- The recipient must alert Westmead Fertility Centre of the outcome following treatment.

If you have further questions or concerns regarding the law surrounding sperm donation, please seek independent legal advice.

Westmead Fertility Centre policies:

- AGE – to maximise the recipient's chances of success whilst reducing the possibility of regret of the donor, a sperm donor at Westmead Fertility Centre must be between **21-60 years of age**. A recipient may receive the embryo created from the donated sperm up until 50 years of age.
- To reduce the risk of any child(ren) born as a result of the donation being affected with a genetic condition (such as cystic fibrosis), the female recipient will undergo genetic screening. If the recipient is a carrier for a genetic condition, the sperm donor may also need to be screened. Genetic counselling is included in the program to ensure an understanding of the reasons why genetic screening is conducted and the implications of inheritable conditions for the individual and their family. Genetic screening tests are an additional cost to the donor work-up fee and may vary depending on the level of screening required.
- To protect all parties involved, donors will be required to undergo comprehensive infectious disease screening, complete a lifestyle questionnaire and declaration and discuss relevant medical history with their Fertility Specialist. Outcomes of these investigations could result in the donor not being approved for donation. The donor will need to consent to any relevant medical or personal information to be discussed with the recipient if necessary.

- If a sperm donor or their current partner has travelled overseas recently, donation may have to be postponed due to Zika virus risk.
- The donor is asked not to partake in high-risk behaviours during the donation process such as being tattooed, receiving acupuncture, using needles, etc. This will be discussed further in the Fertility Specialist consultation.
- To minimise the risk of disease transmission and provide greater assurance for the recipient, the donated sperm will be frozen for three months following sperm collection. The donor will be re-screened for infectious diseases prior to the recipient receiving the embryo in a frozen embryo transfer cycle.
- To maximise the recipient's chance of success and ensure compliance to legislation, Westmead Fertility Centre only allows donation of sperm collected at Westmead Fertility Centre from a donor that has not donated at another clinic.
- When donating to a same-sex female couple, the sperm donor may want to consider whether he is comfortable with the sperm being utilized by both women and if so consent to this scenario. The donated sperm or embryos created using the donated sperm may only be used by the original recipient herself or her female partner (if applicable). The sperm or embryos may not be donated to another couple or individual.
- The standard initial sperm or embryo storage duration at Westmead Fertility Centre is five years. Storage beyond five years requires re-consent from the recipients and is conditional on the recipient's age. Continued storage of embryos is not available at Westmead Fertility Centre for women over 50 years of age.
- Westmead Fertility Centre may have to contact the donor, possibly many years after their sperm donation – so it is important that the donor informs Westmead Fertility Centre of any change in their contact details on a regular basis. Both the donor and recipient should also keep Westmead Fertility Centre informed of any changes to the donor's health or the health of the child(ren) born (as a result of the donation) which may affect the involved parties.

What are the costs of the program?

Once the sperm donor has been initially approved by the Fertility Specialist, the recipient will be required to pay the initial donor 'work-up' fee. Please note, this fee is not covered by Medicare. This work-up fee includes:

- Initial seminal fluid analysis as well as subsequent analyses and sperm freezing;
- All counselling sessions for both the donor and recipient, including the initial genetic counseling;
- The support of a Donor Coordinator and team at Westmead Fertility Centre throughout the donation process.

Please note, the work-up fee is non-refundable if the donor is not deemed suitable to donate, withdraws their consent or the use of the sperm does not create a viable pregnancy. Fertility Specialist consultations, some tests (such as genetic screening) and monthly sperm storage fees are not included in this work-up fee.

It is important to note that once the donation work-up process is completed, there should be sufficient sperm to have several treatment cycles at Westmead Fertility Centre. Westmead Fertility Centre offers treatment cycles using donor sperm at an affordable price. Once the work-up is complete, there are no additional fees on top of the cycle fees for the use of donor gametes. Please refer to Westmead Fertility Centre's website for the up to date sperm donor 'work-up' fee, sperm storage fees and treatment cycle prices. Please be aware that the cycle may only be eligible for Medicare rebates if your Fertility Specialist determines the recipient has a medical cause for infertility. The Fertility Specialist's rooms can be contacted directly to determine the price for their consultations.

Support and counselling

The team at Westmead Fertility Centre is available to answer any questions and discuss any matters which may arise before, during and after treatment. A qualified counsellor is also available on request for support in addition to the counselling included in the donation program. There is no extra charge for this counselling service.

You may want to consider joining an external support group. Such as,

- the Australian infertility support group, ACCESS. 1800 888 896 www.access.org.au
- Australian Donor Conception Network
<https://www.australiandonorconceptionnetwork.org/>