

What does this mean for women? cont.

It is important to know that a woman's fertility is at its peak at around 27 and slowly declines from this point until menopause. There is a significant decline in a woman's fertility from around 35 which becomes even more significant from 38 onwards – by the age of 40 approximately 90% of eggs produced by a woman are abnormal.

In order to assist women preserve their fertility, eggs can be frozen in liquid nitrogen and can then be **stored indefinitely** (at the time of writing this brochure Fertility Solutions has a 10 year time limit) - they are there to be used when you want. Unlike a woman who continues to age, the eggs that have been frozen when she was younger stay the same age that they were when they were frozen. **So what does all this mean?** It means that a woman freezing her eggs at 32 who then wants a baby at 40, has a much higher chance of having a healthy pregnancy and baby using her 32 year old frozen eggs than she would if she were to try with her own 40 year old eggs.

Who may benefit?

Women who are faced with the following may find egg freezing suitable for them:

- ◆ Women who are in their late 20's or mid 30's who have to delay having children because of the lack of a stable relationship
- ◆ Women who wish to delay having children until their late 30's for reasons other than not having a suitable partner
- ◆ Treatment of medical conditions that may leave a female unable to have children

The use of egg freezing therefore makes it possible for women and couples to pursue careers and relationships or undergo life saving treatments, with the chance of future success.

What does a woman have to do to freeze her eggs?

A woman needs to undergo a modified IVF cycle so that a number of eggs can be collected and frozen for future use. This involves the use of medications to stimulate the ovaries to produce many eggs at one time. These eggs are surgically removed once they have reached full maturity and are placed into liquid nitrogen for storage.

HOW TO ARRANGE FOR A FREE CONSULTATION

If you would like more information, please phone 1300 FERTILITY (1300 337845) to arrange for a free, private consultation.

It is important to emphasise that this technology is still in the developmental stages.

We strive to:

- ◆ **Make you feel welcome at all times**
- ◆ **Listen to your questions and concerns**
- ◆ **Work with you to fulfill your desire to create your family**

*We hope you give us the opportunity to
Share Your Journey for Life.*



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*Although Fertility Solutions have made every effort to ensure the accuracy and completeness of information contained in this brochure, we assume no responsibility for errors, inaccuracies, omissions or any inconsistency herein. If you are unsure of anything, please ask your local doctor or your Fertility Specialist Nurse. (VI)



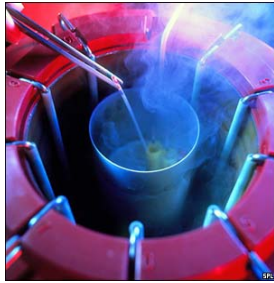
**Not ready for a baby now but
don't want to miss your
chance of a family !**

**EGG
FREEZING
may provide the answer**



***Sharing Your
Journey for Life***

Egg (Oocyte) Freezing



Vitrification (or freezing), is a cutting edge technology for the freezing of eggs which is now available at Fertility Solutions on the Sunshine Coast.

Human sperm have been successfully frozen for decades, with the first successful report of a frozen human embryo generat-

ing a pregnancy in 1983. Subsequently both human sperm and embryo freezing are now considered routine and consistent technologies. Human egg freezing however, has not yet become common practice in all fertility clinics and is still considered experimental.

It has been suggested that freezing and thawing methods may disrupt some of the cellular components within the egg and therefore increase the potential for chromosome abnormalities in some of the resulting embryos. So far, there have been only a 1000 or so babies born from vitrified eggs (with 6 babies being born at the fertility clinic that Fertility Solutions Scientific Director, Dr. Rebecca Matthews worked at in the United States). To date, there does not appear to be any increased risks to Babies born from this technique. When a new technique is used, any potential long term effects are obviously not known, but historical use of egg/embryo freezing leaves us confident that this method is safe.

What does this mean for women and couples?

There are many instances when egg freezing can be used to help preserve fertility. This may be because women (or couples) have focused on a career, financial stability - or for some women they are yet to find "Mr Right". Another reason that women would consider egg freezing is for medical purposes when she has a serious illness and treatment may leave her infertile (e.g. cancer treatment).

The goal of egg freezing is to attempt to preserve some fertility in women at risk of declining fertility. It is not a guarantee that a pregnancy or baby will result from the use of this technology.

How are the Eggs Frozen and Stored?

The mature eggs undergo a freezing process and are stored in liquid nitrogen at the Fertility Solutions Sunshine Coast Clinic. Currently, it is believed that frozen eggs can remain in storage for many years, as is the case for frozen embryos or sperm.

When can the Frozen Eggs be used?

When the frozen eggs are required they undergo a thawing process within the laboratory. It is expected that between 70% and 80% of frozen eggs survive the freeze/thaw process.

When a woman is ready to try for a pregnancy, the eggs are thawed and fertilized using a technique known as ICSI (intracytoplasmic sperm injection) where a single sperm is injected directly into an egg. The fertilised egg(s) is then cultured in the lab for several days and when it reaches a certain stage of development is transferred into the uterus as an embryo(s).

ICSI Procedure



It is important to note that not every thawed egg will fertilise however it is expected that approximately 70-60% of frozen oocytes, when injected with sperm, will fertilise.

An important question to ask when choosing a clinic that is offering egg freezing is, what experience does the laboratory staff have with this technology.

The aim of egg freezing is not to encourage women who could have a family at the normal time to not do so because they think egg freezing will be an alternative.

It is important to emphasise that this technology is still in the developmental stages and does not guarantee a pregnancy or a baby.

Sometimes things don't always go to plan—what are the risks?

The processes involved with egg freezing have some risk. Some of these are outlined below:

- ◆ **No eggs are collected at the egg collection procedure. The reported incidence of this complication happening is less than 5%.**
- ◆ **The eggs collected are not mature and are not suitable for freezing. This complication is not common and would be seen in less than 5% of cases.**
- ◆ **None of the eggs frozen survive the thawing process. This complication is more likely to be seen when the number of eggs collected are low.**
- ◆ **None of the thawed oocytes fertilise even though the sperm was injected into them. As with the above, this situation is more likely to occur when the numbers of eggs injected are low.**
- ◆ **A pregnancy test is negative despite having embryos transferred into the uterus.**
- ◆ **A pregnancy may be confirmed but does not continue to develop i.e. miscarriage or ectopic pregnancy. This can also occur by natural conception.**
- ◆ **A baby may be born with an abnormality. 2-3% of all babies born are have an abnormality and is not necessarily related to having had fertility treatment.**

It must be noted that all of the above scenarios can occur under normal IVF procedures.

What will it cost?

The out of pocket cost for egg freezing will depend upon the reason for you freezing your eggs in the first place. When you attend Fertility Solutions for your free consultation we will be able to provide you with a more accurate costing relevant to your circumstances.

No Guarantee:

Women considering egg freezing as an option must be aware that it does not give a guarantee that a healthy, live baby will be the result. In fact, Fertility Solutions encourages women to talk with one of their counsellors about this decision – so that all possible aspects can be considered. If you would like to talk with a counsellor, please ask your nurse who can arrange this for you.