



## Egg freezing

Egg freezing is an option for women who wish to preserve their fertility and give themselves options for the future. At Cambridge IVF we can collect your eggs, freeze them and store them safely until you are ready to use them to try for a baby.

## Who might want to freeze their eggs?

Women choose to freeze eggs for medical or social reasons.

**Premature infertility:** You may wish to freeze your eggs if there is a risk you may become prematurely infertile. This may occur if you have been diagnosed with early menopause or if you are undergoing chemotherapy for the treatment of cancer.

**Social egg freezing:** Some women feel that they are not ready to have a baby yet. There may be a number of different reasons you feel this way, maybe the demands of your career mean that you'll choose to delay starting a family, or perhaps you haven't met someone that you want to have a family with yet.

## Why freeze my eggs?

Women are born with all the eggs they'll ever have and these egg reserves are gradually depleted during their reproductive years prior to menopause. Research has shown that on average women are most fertile up to the age of 32 when fertility starts to decrease and that beyond the age of 35 there is a sharp decline in fertility.

If you feel that you are unlikely to be able to start a family soon yet are keen to have the option when the time is right, you may wish to consider freezing your eggs. Alternatively if you've been advised that your ovarian reserve (an indicator of your fertility) is low or your fertility is at risk, you may wish to freeze eggs before it becomes worse.

If you need to use your frozen eggs in the future it's good to know that your chance of pregnancy is dependent upon the age you were when the eggs were frozen. For example, a 38 year old using eggs which were frozen when she was 33 has a better chance of having a baby than if she used her

fresh "38 year old" eggs.

## What does it involve?

The egg freezing process involves stimulating the [ovaries](#) to develop multiple eggs, as with an IVF [cycle](#), however the eggs are frozen once they are collected from the [ovaries](#). We monitor the growth and development of the follicles within the [ovaries](#) and then collect the eggs at the optimum time using a fine needle. The process takes several weeks from first taking medication to having the [egg collection](#) and in total there will be between 3 and 6 appointments. We'll be as flexible as possible with your appointments to fit them around your other commitments. Depending on the number of eggs stored we may discuss with you the option of undergoing a further [cycle](#), in order to maximise the chances of success when you're ready to thaw the eggs.

The technique we use in the laboratory for freezing the eggs is called vitrification. Vitrification of eggs has replaced the historical method called slow freezing, meaning that the chance of eggs surviving the freezing and thawing process is much higher than previously.

## What happens in the future?

When you are ready we will thaw your eggs for you. We expect 80% or more of the eggs to survive the freezing and thawing process. Studies have demonstrated that the freezing and thawing process does not affect the chance of success when compared to eggs which have not been frozen. In your case the biological age of your eggs will be younger than you at the time of treatment which means that your chance of a successful outcome is higher than other women in your age group using their own fresh eggs.

## Next steps

If you are interested to find out more about egg freezing, please contact us to book for an information session or to arrange a consultation.