

Cambridge IVF

Information for potential sperm donors – preparing to be a donor

Thank you for expressing an interest in becoming a sperm donor. The following information is intended to give you information on how to prepare to become a donor. Further information regarding becoming a donor is available on our website.

The process of spermatogenesis (sperm production) is cyclical and takes around 3 months to complete. Therefore prior to and during the course of your donation you will be advised to maintain a healthy lifestyle to maximise your sperm quality.

This will include having a balanced, **healthy diet** and maintaining a healthy weight. Being **overweight** (BMI \leq 25) can have health implications and could cause a decline in sperm quality.

Some **medications, supplements and drugs** are not suitable to take when trying to have a baby and therefore they're also not suitable to take prior to sperm donation. Please inform our team of anything that you might be taking and seek advice from a doctor or pharmacist before taking anything else.

Prior to each donation you will be asked to maintain an **abstinence period of 2-5 days**. If you have been unwell and had a raised temperature in the last three months it is important that you let us know as this can affect the quality of your sperm sample.

Research suggests that people who smoke are less likely to conceive following IVF treatment. Therefore it would be beneficial for a donor to be a non-smoker too. If you would like help to **stop smoking** please speak to the nurses who can offer you advice, or locate services near you.

The Department of Health now advises that people trying to conceive **should avoid drinking alcohol excessively** and therefore sperm donors should limit drinking alcohol during the course of donation. If you choose to drink alcohol then avoid drinking more than 14 units per week and spread this evenly over 3 or more days.

During the course of donation you will be advised to only have **protected sex** (i.e. use a barrier method such as a condom). This will avoid the risk of contracting a **sexually transmitted infection** (STI) during the course of donation.

If you are worried about this we encourage you to let us know. At each donation appointment we will ask if you've been knowingly exposed to, or been treated for, any STIs since your last visit. If you experience any clinical sign(s) of an STI at any time during the donation period please immediately tell us.

Where can I find more support and information?

Human Fertilisation & Embryology Authority (HFEA)

UK's government regulator responsible for making sure fertility clinics and research centres comply with the law. This website provides free, clear and impartial information on UK fertility clinics, IVF and other types of fertility treatment, and donation.

Website: www.hfea.gov.uk

Tel: 02072 918 200

Sperm, Egg And Embryo Donation (SEED) Trust

A registered charity, the SEED website provides a hub of clear and practical information about donating and receiving eggs, sperm and embryos in the UK.

Website: www.seedtrust.org.uk

Donor Conception Network

A supportive network of more than 2,000 mainly UK based families with children conceived with donated sperm, eggs or embryos, those considering or undergoing donor conception procedures; and donor conceived people.

Website: www.dcnetwork.org

Tel: 02072 782 608

British Infertility Counselling Association (BICA)

A registered charity and the UK's leading professional fertility counselling association. BICA is recognised by both the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority and the British Fertility Society. The website includes a list of counsellors able to provide specialist fertility counselling to both patients and donors.

Website: www.bica.net

Fertility Network UK

The UK's leading patient-focused fertility charity, able to provide free and impartial support, advice, information and understanding for anyone affected by fertility issues. The website gives access to a community of people affected by fertility problems and provides a free Support Line if required.

Website: www.fertilitynetworkuk.org

Tel: 01424 732 361

Fertility Friends

An active self-help community for people experiencing infertility. This site features a forum of message boards and live chat rooms on a range of topics.

Website: www.fertilityfriends.co.uk

Contact us:

We hope you have found this booklet informative. We realise we may not have covered all of your questions so if you do have any other queries we are here to help so please contact us via any of the means below:

Cambridge IVF
Kefford House
Maris Lane
Trumpington
Cambridge

