

# Sperm Freeze

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Fertility preservation is the process of safeguarding an individual's ability to have biological children in the future, typically by freezing, eggs, embryos, sperm and ovarian tissue. This is often recommended for individuals undergoing medical treatments, such as chemotherapy or radiation, which could impact their reproductive health.

The preservation process allows for storage of reproductive cells for future use in assisted reproductive technologies, such as in vitro fertilisation (IVF). Fertility preservation offers peace of mind, providing individuals with options to build a family when they are ready. While fertility preservation provides valuable options for future family-building, it's important to understand that it does not guarantee a successful pregnancy or birth.

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## What is Sperm Freezing?

Sperm freezing (cryopreservation) is the process of preserving cells for future use. The sperm is frozen and stored in a laboratory for later use in assisted reproductive technologies like intrauterine insemination (IUI) or in vitro fertilisation (IVF).

This is typically recommended for men who are undergoing medical treatment that may impact future fertility, or who are not ready to conceive but want to preserve their fertility later in life.

## How is Sperm Freezing performed?

- ◆ The sperm is collected via masturbation in a private room at your chosen fertility clinic. In some cases, pending health conditions and age, sperm can also be collected through medical procedures such as aspiration or biopsy if necessary.
- ◆ The sperm is then analysed for its quality, which includes motility, morphology and concentration.
- ◆ After analysis, sperm is mixed with a cryoprotectant, a substance that helps protect the sperm during freezing, and then frozen in a cryo-storage unit.

## Success Rates and Viability

Sperm can be stored for many years. Studies show that sperm can remain viable for decades when frozen properly.

The success rate of sperm in IVF or IUI can depend on several factors, including:

- ◆ **Sperm quality:** The initial quality of the sperm before freezing is critical. Better quality sperm (higher motility and count) generally leads to higher success rates when thawed and used in future assisted reproductive procedures.

- ◆ **Thawing:** After thawing, sperm can lose some motility but many remain viable for future fertilisation.
- ◆ **Age:** Sperm quality tends to decrease with age, so freezing sperm at a younger age may increase the chances of success in the future.

## Risks and Considerations

- ◆ **Cost:** Sperm freezing and storage incur upfront costs and ongoing annual storage fees. One of our Patient Liaison Administrators will be able to discuss this in detail with you.
- ◆ **Sperm viability:** While most sperm can survive freezing, not all sperm will be viable after thawing.

## When should you consider Sperm Freezing?

- ◆ **Cancer treatment:** Men undergoing chemotherapy, radiation or other treatments that may affect fertility.
- ◆ **Vasectomy:** Men considering a vasectomy may freeze sperm beforehand if they are unsure about future family planning.
- ◆ **Age related fertility decline:** Some men freeze sperm before the age of 35, believing that sperm quality may decline with age.
- ◆ **Lifestyle or environmental factors:** Men who are exposed to environmental toxins, chemicals or high-risk jobs might consider sperm freezing for long term fertility preservation.
- ◆ **Sperm donation:** Men who would like to donate their sperm.

