

Information for Patients

A guide to using donor sperm

Welcome to the Department of Reproductive Medicine at the Old St Mary's Hospital. Following your doctor's appointment, you should now have a treatment plan in place. This leaflet has been provided to you by the doctor to guide you through the next steps of your treatment.

Your next appointment will be for the completion of implications counselling with one of our dedicated counsellors. Once this is complete you will see the nurse donor coordinator to discuss your donor sperm requirements. The following information will guide you through the process of selecting donor sperm in the comfort of your own home.

The Department of Reproductive Medicine is licensed to use The Fairfax Cryobank storage facility in which there are more than 100 HFEA (Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority) compliant donors who are registered. It may be that, when you come to see the nurse specialist in clinic you have already found your donor. The nurse will discuss this with you then process your request via the department's andrology Service. It may be of benefit for you to select two preferences of a donor to ensure that you have an alternative choice if your first choice is unavailable. Some of the reasons that a donor may not be available include maximum number of pregnancies achieved, or sperm vial concentrations that are not suitable for your type of treatment.

Please now go to www.fairfaxcryobank.com/uk and ensure that the Union Jack flag is displayed on the web page to ensure that you are on the correct website. Now continue to the tab that states donor search and enter in the donor category "any". You can now begin your donor search by entering the specific attributes that are most important to you for example, hair colour. Please note that the more attributes that you select will mean a reduction in the donors available for selection.

For CMV status please select NEGATIVE. CMV (cytomegalovirus) is a flu like virus to which most adults have been exposed to and have developed immunity. It is usually a harmless virus but can go on to cause problems in babies if contracted during pregnancy (congenital CMV). A pregnant woman can pass CMV to her unborn baby via her bloodstream across the placenta. Babies born with congenital CMV infection can develop health problems that are apparent at birth or that develop in later childhood, such as hearing loss. However, the Royal College of Gynecologists advises that only 5-10% of babies born with congenital CMV will be affected. If you are CMV negative, you should consider restricting your selection to CMV negative donors to minimise the risk to a new born. We will conduct this blood test for you in the department and advise you of the result. You may wish to wait for your result before selecting a donor.

Blood Type and Rhesus Factor

Most people are unaware of their blood group and Rhesus factor unless they have been admitted to hospital for surgery, tests/investigations or have donated blood. In selecting your donor it is not imperative to know your blood group. This will only be required if you achieve a pregnancy. If a baby has a different rhesus blood group to the mother, it can be possible for maternal antibodies to form against the foetal blood cells. Your midwife will discuss this in more detail if a pregnancy is achieved.

Genetic Status

Occasionally some of the donors are carriers of genetic conditions. Details of a donor's genetic condition can be viewed by clicking on the donor information section. Please pay attention to selecting a donor that does not carry a genetic risk. If you wish to select a donor that is a genetic carrier then you will require a genetic screen (blood test), genetic counselling and a doctor's appointment prior to proceeding with that donor.

** If you have any issues navigating the website or selecting a donor, then the nurse will be able to assist when you attend the appointment to see the donor nurse coordinator. **

Treatment

The number of donor sperm vials reserved for your treatment will depend on your planned treatment cycle/s. If you achieve a pregnancy, then you will be given the option to purchase any further vials for potential future siblings. Legally sperm will only be held in the department for a term of 10 years, as set out by the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority.