



## PATIENT INFORMATION LEAFLET

# A GUIDE TO USING DONOR SPERM

This leaflet has been provided to you by the donor team to guide you through the next steps of your treatment in selecting donor sperm for use in your treatment cycles from the comfort of your own home.

## FAIRFAX CRYOBANK

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) UK-compliant donors who are registered. It may be that when you come to see the nurse specialist in the clinic you have already found your donor. The nurse will discuss this with you and ensure they are a suitable choice, and then process your request via the department's Andrology Service. It may be of benefit for you to select three preferences of a donor to ensure that you have an alternative if your first choice is unavailable. Some of the reasons that a donor may not be available include all family slots being taken, Fairfax does not have any vials for us to place an order, genetic risk being too high, or sperm vial concentrations that are not suitable for your type of treatment.

To start your search please now go to [www.fairfaxcryobank.com/uk](http://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, ethnicity, hair colour, eye colour and many more. Please note that the more attributes that you select will mean a reduction in the donors available for selection. As a unit we require you to select ICI and IUI premium under the specimen type, these vials have the highest number of motile sperm. This is still applicable if you are having IVF/ICSI treatment, despite there being an ICSI specimen type.

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

## CYTOMEGALOVIRUS

All donors are screened for cytomegalovirus (CMV). A blood test indicates whether a donor has an acute infection or a past infection with CMV and developed antibodies to it. Any sperm samples provided when there is a concern of an ACTIVE infection would be destroyed by Fairfax. CMV is a

flu-like virus to which most adults have been exposed and have developed immunity, therefore around 80% of donors will show as CMV positive. After the initial infection, the virus remains dormant within that person's body for life. It is unusual for recurrent infections to occur. 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 or choose a selection of donors that are CMV positive/negative to bring back to the donor clinic to discuss. You will also receive a CMV information sheet further to this guide.

## **GENETIC STATUS**

As the panel screening for genetics has become so vast many of the donors are carriers of genetic conditions. Details of a donor's genetic screening and condition can be viewed by clicking on the donor and then accessing the genetic testing document. Please pay attention to this document when selecting a donor. If you wish to select a donor that is a genetic carrier this will require further discussion at your donor clinic appointment. In some cases, we may be able to offer a genetic screen (blood test) however this is very rare due to the complexities and timescales required for genetic testing. We can refer you to our genetics team for you to have a further discussion or counselling. Our donor team can provide advice and support regarding genetic status of donors. Donors accepted are carriers and not themselves affected by the condition. When two people are both carriers the chance of a child born affected is increased.

## **BLOOD GROUP 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 and what we can do.

## **DONOR SPERM VIAL ORDERING**

Your donor order will be placed from your donor clinic appointment, please do not try to order yourself through the website as there are several safety checks that need to be undertaken. The donor coordinator nurse will discuss your choice and send order forms to the andrology department to formalise the order. Mostly a shipment will be required from Fairfax America for the procurement of these vials. This may take a couple of weeks. You will be contacted by the donor coordinator

once the vials have arrived at Old Saint Marys Hospital ready for your use in treatment. You will then be advised that you can request treatment once vials are allocated. The number of donor sperm vials ordered for your treatment will depend on your planned treatment cycle/s. We require 1 vial per treatment cycle and order a maximum of 3 vials at a time. 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.

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### WHAT WILL THE DONORS HAVE BEEN SCREENED FOR?

Before donation, the embryo donors will complete rigorous screening tests which are completed by Fairfax to reduce the risks of passing on diseases or deformities to any resultant child. These tests will include:

- HIV 1 & 2
- Hepatitis B
- Hepatitis C
- Syphilis
- Human T cell Lymphotropic Viruses (HTLV 1 & 2)
- CMV
- Herpes simplex virus 1 & 2
- Human papillomavirus
- Chlamydia & Gonorrhoea
- Karyotype (Their genetic make-up)
- Cystic Fibrosis (to see if they are a carrier)

Expanded Genetic Disease Carrier Screening Panel currently at 502 diseases tested by gene sequencing. Previously the panel was that of 283 diseases.

Other tests may have been performed depending on a potential donor's ethnic group.

All samples are then quarantined for 180 days and the donor will have a virology rescreen to ensure all results remain negative due to the window of detection.

### WHO WILL BE THE LEGAL PARENT(S)?

The woman who gives birth is always considered to be the child's legal mother. The law only recognises one person as the legal mother of a child.

Where the woman who gives birth is married or in a civil partnership, her husband/wife will be the legal father/parent of the child, unless it can be shown that he/she did not consent to their treatment. A female second parent is not the legal mother of the child; the law does not allow a child to have two legal mothers.

When the woman giving birth is not married or in a civil partnership, the legal father or second parent of the child will be the person who is named on the 'consent to parenthood' forms. Both the named

person and the woman giving birth must consent to the second parent being recognised as the child's legal parent.

## WHAT CAN RECIPIENTS BE TOLD ABOUT THE SPERM DONOR AT THE TIME OF SELECTION?

During your clinic consultation you will have been shown how to navigate the Fairfax website. This website holds all information surrounding the donors to help make your choice. You can see non-identifying information such as physical characteristics (height, hair colour, eye colour and blood group) and a picture of the donor as a child.

The donors also provide other non-identifying information about themselves, such as hobbies or interests, alongside an in depth medical history of themselves and family.

## WILL THE DONOR REMAIN ANONYMOUS?

You should be aware that donors are no longer able to remain anonymous due to changes in the law.

From the age of 16, a donor-conceived child is entitled to access non-identifying information about the selected donor, such as height, hair colour and hobbies.

From the age of 18, any child born from a donation can apply for identifying information about the donor such as name, date of birth and last known address.

These details will be held on a register at the (HFEA) and are accessible to a child born of donation from their 18th birthday.

This will be further discussed at your implications counselling session, and there are a vast amount of support groups and networks available to guide you through this. Please access the HFEA website also for further information on using donated sperm in your treatment cycle.

Please see this link for further information: <https://www.hfea.gov.uk/donation/finding-out-about-your-donor/>

You may also want to contact the Donor Conception Network, a self-help network for families created with the help of donated eggs, sperm or embryos: [www.dcnetwork.org](http://www.dcnetwork.org)

## CONTACT DETAILS



0161 276 6000



<https://mft.nhs.uk/saint-marys/services/gynaecology/reproductive-medicine/>