

# Information on Known Sperm Donation

## Introduction

This document is prepared in accordance with the guidelines outlined by the Reproductive Technology Accreditation Committee (RTAC) Code of Practice (COP), the NSW Human Tissue ACT 1983, Human Tissue Regulation 2005, the NSW Assisted Reproductive Technology Act 2007 and the Assisted Reproductive Technology Regulation 2009. Fertility First adheres to the NHMRC June 2007, *Ethical guidelines on the use of assisted reproductive technology in clinical practice and research*.

Each year thousands of Australians seek medical advice because of their inability to conceive. At least 15% of couples will experience some degree of infertility, with all its accompanying feelings and frustrations.

For some of these couples, using donated sperm may be their chance of achieving pregnancy.

Donor sperm is required for women when the male:

- Is azoospermic (no sperm produced).
- Has impaired sperm production due to surgery, trauma or infection to their genitalia.
- Has lost their sperm due to cancer therapy.
- Carries a genetic disorder.
- Has repeated failure of fertilisation in IVF.
- Is implicated in unexplained repeated miscarriage.

Alternatively, single women or women in single sex relationships may seek fertility treatment using semen from donors.

## Who can become a donor?

Ideally, donors should be aged 21 to 40 years, produce good quality semen and have no evidence of any hereditary illness or sexually transmissible disease.

## Interview and Screening process

Donors undergo the following interview and screening process:

One or two semen samples are checked to determine semen suitability and whether it will adequately survive freezing and thawing. A semen and urine sample is sent to pathology and cultured for evidence of bacterial infection, gonorrhoea, chlamydia and ureaplasma.

A blood sample is taken for the following tests:

- full blood examination (including blood group)
- screening for infectious diseases such as HIV (the AIDS virus), syphilis, hepatitis B and hepatitis C, CMV and HTLV I & II.

After consultation with the donor, Medical Director and recipient, the following additional blood tests may be requested

- screening for cystic fibrosis (CF) carrier status. One in 25 people are a carrier for CF, and since some recipients may be carriers, donors are screened so that any resulting children are not afflicted with cystic fibrosis, which can be life threatening.
- assessment of the number and condition of your chromosomes (a genetic 'karyotype');
- screening for ethnically related genetic diseases (eg. Thalassaemia, Tay-Sachs and Gauchers)

An initial counselling interview with the donor and his spouse or partner (if applicable) is arranged to discuss the personal, social and legal aspects of donation. After a one month "cooling off" period, all participants involved in the donation process are required to attend a joint counselling session.

A medical interview is also arranged, in which the donor undergoes a physical examination, a medical history is recorded, and the donor and his partner (if applicable) sign consent forms and a lifestyle declaration(s).

## Consent Forms and Lifestyle Declarations

RTAC requires that every semen donor signs consent and declaration forms. The consents are agreements to donate and to have sperm cryopreserved, plus lifestyle and family history declarations. Donors may be asked to reaffirm the lifestyle declaration during the course of their donations.

Donors who consent are provided with copies of the signed consent forms, which must be signed in the presence of a medical practitioner. Consent must also be obtained from your spouse or partner (if relevant).

## Changing or Revoking Consent

A donor may at any time prior to the use of his semen, vary or revoke his consent by notice in writing to the Medical Director of Fertility First. If consent is revoked, Fertility First is required to dispose of any remaining samples.

## Donation of Sperm

The blood tests may take up to three weeks to complete. If the tests are negative and you have completed the interview and screening requirements, you can start having semen stored.

## How are the semen samples collected?

Donors attend the Fertility First laboratory at 52 Gloucester Road, Hurstville. Samples can be produced during the week from 7.30am to 2.00pm. An appointment is necessary. Please phone the laboratory on (02) 9586 3311.

We ask that you abstain from intercourse and masturbation (ejaculation) for at least 2-3 days prior to producing each sample so that your semen is of optimal quality.

Samples must be produced by masturbation without using lubricants and must be collected into the sterile containers provided. Magazines (e.g. Penthouse) are supplied for use in the collection rooms.

## Are there any health issues I should inform you about?

It is imperative that you inform the if:

- You contract a cold, the flu or a more serious illness. Your health may affect your semen quality.
- You start taking drugs or medication of any kind.
- You and/or your sexual partner(s) contract an infectious disease such as HIV, hepatitis, syphilis, herpes, gonorrhoea or chlamydia, either while you are an active donor or after you stop donating.
- You, your children or anyone in your family is diagnosed with a congenital or hereditary disease or illness, either while you are an active donor or after you stop donating.

## Expected Number of Donations

Known donors should be prepared to donate at least 3 samples. This is because recipients often require several cycles of treatment to become pregnant.

Your sperm can be cryopreserved and stored for use in a treatment cycle up to a maximum of ten (10) years

## Semen Quarantine Before Use

Cryopreserved donor sperm cannot be used unless the donor remains infection free six months after the sperm was donated, eg. If the initial donation is made in **JANUARY 2009**, the donor will need to repeat blood, urine and semen tests in **JULY 2009** to clear the sperm from quarantine.

We require you to attend Fertility First for repeat blood tests to clear your sperm donation. We must stress the importance of returning for blood tests so that your sperm can be used. **Without repeat blood screens the semen cannot be used for insemination.**

***It is your responsibility to contact Fertility First to arrange an appointment to repeat the blood and semen screens at the conclusion of the quarantine period. If you choose to have screens performed elsewhere, you must contact Fertility First to obtain a pathology request form to ensure that all the relevant screens are performed.***

## Legal Status of Paternity

The welfare of a child conceived using donated semen is of paramount importance. Furthermore, a child conceived using donated semen is legally deemed to be the child of the recipient(s), and the donor has no legal rights or responsibilities regarding the child.

Laws which pertain to Donor Insemination are defined in NSW State Legislation and we feel it is important that you are made aware of the relevant section. Please read the following paragraphs from *The Status of Children Act, 1996*:

**14. Presumptions of parentage arising out of use of fertilisation procedures**

1. *When a married woman has undergone a fertilisation procedure as a result of which she becomes pregnant:*
  - a) *her husband is presumed to be the father of any child born as a result of the pregnancy even if he did not provide any or all of the sperm used in the procedure, but only if he consented to the procedure.*
2. *If a woman (whether married or unmarried) becomes pregnant by means of a fertilisation procedure using any sperm obtained from a man who is not her husband, that man is presumed not to be the father of any child born as a result of the pregnancy.*

## Information made available to Recipients/Children

The *Assisted Reproductive Technology Act, 2007* has recently been passed in NSW and will commence on January 1, 2010. A Central ART Registrar will be maintained by the NSW Director General and people born as a result of donor conception will have access to IDENTIFYING INFORMATION ABOUT THEIR DONORS once they turn 18 years of age.

## What do I do next if I wish to be a sperm donor?

If you are interested in becoming a sperm donor, please phone the Fertility First laboratory to make an appointment for a semen analysis, sperm DNA fragmentation test and a trial freeze. A trial freeze is necessary as not all men's sperm survives the freezing process, even though the sample may be perfectly normal when fresh.

A referral from your GP is advisable.

Further appointments will be arranged with our Doctor to discuss your results and our Counsellor for your initial interviews. These can take place on the same day. Please refer to the contact details below;

Fertility First  
Centre for Reproductive Health  
52 Gloucester Road  
Hurstville, 2220, NSW

Phone: 61 2 9586 3311  
Fax: 61 2 9586 3322  
Email: [fert1@fertilityfirst.com.au](mailto:fert1@fertilityfirst.com.au)