

Fertility Preservation

For Gender-Diverse Youth and Young Adults

What is fertility preservation?

Gender-affirming hormones and some surgeries can make it hard or impossible to get pregnant or to make someone pregnant. Before starting these treatments, some people take steps to make it more likely to have biological children in the future. This is called fertility preservation.

Your care team at the Gender Clinic can talk to you more about this process, even if you are not sure right now.

When should I start?

We strongly recommend talking with your doctor about fertility preservation before starting hormone therapy. Starting early can make the process shorter and more likely to be successful.

If you want to preserve sperm or eggs, you must do so before having surgical removal of the testes (orchiectomy) or removal of the ovaries (oophorectomy).

What if I don't want children or I want to adopt?

It is perfectly fine if you do not want children or are not sure yet. Some people change their minds about wanting to be a parent, so you might want to consider saving sperm or eggs just in case.

When asked, transgender adults say that they wish they had preserved their sperm or eggs, or wish that their doctor had at least talked to them about it.

There are other ways to become a parent without using your sperm or eggs, such as adoption, foster care, or choosing someone else to carry the pregnancy (surrogacy). Costs related to adoption can range significantly depending on if you choose private adoption or the public foster care system. Saving sperm or eggs can give you another option for having children in the future.

What if take puberty blockers?

You will have to stop your puberty blocker and go through your birth-assigned puberty for a period of time before you can store your sperm or eggs. Talk to your doctor at the Gender Clinic about if this will work for you.

What if I am already taking hormones?

It is possible to preserve sperm or eggs after starting gender-affirming hormone therapy. This varies from person to person, so talk to your Gender Clinic doctor about what would work for you.

- **If you are taking testosterone:** you will have to stop for at least a few months, and you will have to take different hormones for a couple weeks during the egg collection process.
 - **If you are taking estrogen or an androgen blocker (spironolactone):** you will most likely need to stop taking both for a few months.
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To Learn More

- Adolescent Medicine
206-987-2028
- Ask your child's healthcare provider
- seattlechildrens.org

Free Interpreter Services

- In the hospital, ask your nurse.
- From outside the hospital, call the toll-free Family Interpreting Line, 1-866-583-1527. Tell the interpreter the name or extension you need.

How are sperm or eggs collected?

If you have ovaries:

You will start by taking medicine for 10 to 14 days to stimulate egg production. You will have to make several visits to the fertility clinic to check on the progress. At your last visit, the fertility clinic will collect eggs through a minor surgical procedure. This process can take 1 month or more.

If you have testicles:

Usually, you will provide at least 1 sperm sample at the fertility clinic by ejaculating into a container. The clinic may ask you to provide more than 1 sample over several weeks. If you do not feel comfortable doing this at the clinic, you may be able to buy a kit to use at home. It is also possible for a doctor to get sperm directly from your testicles using a minor surgical procedure. Talk to the fertility clinic about all your options.

You may also be able to save tissue from your testicles or ovaries to use later. Right now, doctors are not sure if this method will work, but the technology might be developed in the future. Talk to the fertility clinic about all your options.

How much does it cost?

Usually, insurance does not cover the cost of fertility preservation. You may have to pay for the cost of collecting and freezing your sperm or eggs (preservation process). There is also a yearly storage fee to keep your sperm or eggs at the fertility clinic.

Ask the fertility clinic about the costs and what is included when you call them.

These are the average costs listed on allianceforfertilitypreservation.org, as of February 2020:

- Egg freezing: \$10,000 to 15,000
- Egg storage: \$300 to 500 per year
- Sperm banking: \$500 to 1000
- Sperm storage: \$140 to 500 per year

What steps would I take?

If you decide fertility preservation is right for you, these are the steps you take:

1. Talk to your doctor at the Gender Clinic.
2. Call a fertility clinic in your area. If you are not sure where to go, ask the Gender Clinic Care Navigators for a referral.
3. Schedule your first appointment.
4. If you are under 18, have your parent or guardian sign a consent.
5. Complete any lab work that the fertility clinic orders.
6. Return to the fertility clinic for sperm or egg collection.
7. The fertility clinic will check your sperm or eggs and talk to you about your results.
8. Your sperm or eggs will be stored in case you need them in the future.

Options for fertility preservation

These clinics offer fertility services including sperm and egg preservation. If you need additional referrals for fertility preservation clinics, please talk with the Gender Clinic Care Navigators.

Cryo Choice

Home sperm banking kits
cryochoice.com

Dr. Kevin Ostrowski, Evergreen Health

Needle aspiration sperm banking
Kirkland, WA
425-899-5800
evergreenhealth.com

MAIA Midwifery & Fertility

Seattle, WA (also offers telehealth appointments)
510-462-2554
maiamidwifery.com

ORM Fertility

Bellevue, WA (additional locations in Portland, OR)
425-332-5529
ormfertility.com/bellevue

Pacific Northwest Fertility

Locations in Seattle and Bellevue, WA
Offers a free 30-minute phone consultation.
206-515-0000
pnwfertility.com

ReproTech

Home sperm banking kits
reprotech.com

Seattle Reproductive Medicine

Locations in Seattle, Everett, Kirkland, Tacoma, and Spokane, WA
877-938-4852
seattlefertility.com

Trans Fertility Co.

Resources for transgender fertility
transfertility.co/