



Patient Information

What is sperm banking? (Haematology Oncology)

What is sperm banking?

Sperm banking is the preservation (or saving) of sperm by freezing so they may be used subsequently for artificial insemination or other assisted reproduction technique.

Why do I need sperm storage?

Some chemotherapy drugs will have no effect on your fertility, but others may reduce the number of sperm you produce or their ability to reach and fertilize the female egg during sexual intercourse. The effect may be temporary but in some cases may result in infertility. Successful sperm preservation gives you a possibility of fathering a child at a later date using your pre-treatment stored sperm.

The chemotherapy drugs do not have a permanent effect on your sexual performance or your ability to enjoy sex. You will still be able to get an erection and orgasm as you did before you started treatment.

You may find that during your treatment you have no sex drive at all, or it has been reduced due to the treatment. This is common and should return to normal after your treatment has finished.

If you have not completed your family before you are offered chemotherapy you may be able to store some sperm for later use. Not all men's sperm will freeze well and there is no way of predicting whose sperm will survive the freezing and thawing process. This is particularly relevant when the man has been unwell as illness can adversely affect sperm quality. However the quality of sperm will not deteriorate with time once it is frozen.

The number of years sperm can be frozen for depends on your age at the time of storage.



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Are there any tests required before sperm can be stored?

Yes – before the storage can go ahead you will be asked for some blood tests. These can be done at the hospital or by your GP. The tests will include HIV, Hepatitis C and Hepatitis B. It is now policy for every patient wishing to store sperm to be screened for these viruses. The results are needed to ensure the safety of stored samples.

Arranging sperm storage

If you decide you would like to have sperm stored please speak to the Haematology Nurse Specialist. She will arrange this with Oxford Fertility and you can then telephone the clinic on 01865 782800 to make a suitable appointment with them.

The Fertility Unit will give you instructions and tell you what to expect from your clinic visit. Patients are normally recommended to abstain from sex or ejaculation/masturbation for between 2 – 5 days prior to collecting the sample at the clinic.

At the consultation you will be asked to consider certain issues such as what should happen to the stored sperm in the event of your death, who will use the sperm and how long do you want the sperm stored for. You may find some of the questions upsetting but you are now legally required to answer them before storage can take place. You will then be asked to sign a consent form.

You will be given the opportunity to provide a semen sample in a quiet and private, comfortably furnished room after which it is handed into the laboratory for analysis.

How specimens are stored and what it costs

The number of sperm samples you choose to store will usually depend on the time available before your treatment starts. After your sperm has been collected and analysed it will be stored if there are live sperm present. You would be contacted annually to renew your consent to continue storage. You must therefore remember to inform the Fertility Clinic if you change address.

The cost of sperm banking and storage will be discussed with you during your Consultation at the Fertility Clinic.

Using the sperm in the future

If you wish to use the stored sperm in the future there can be no guarantee of a pregnancy. When frozen/thawed sperm is used the quality of sperm after thawing may be too poor to use for artificial insemination. Techniques such as IVF (in vitro fertilisation, test tube baby) and more recently ICSI (intracytoplasmic sperm injection) give a much better chance of success.



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Your appointment for sperm storage will take place in Oxford Fertility. The address is:

**Oxford Fertility
Institute of Reproductive Sciences
Oxford Business Park North
Oxford
OX4 2HW**

Further information about sperm storage can be found on the website for Oxford Fertility, www.oxfordfertility.co.uk, or you can contact them directly on 01865 782800 Monday to Friday 08.00 am – 5.00 pm.

Alternatively you can speak to one of the Haematology / Oncology Clinical Nurse Specialists on 01793 604341. Monday to Friday 08.00 – 5.00 pm.

This information sheet is available to order in other languages and formats. If you would like a copy, please contact us on 01793 604031 or email gwh.pals@nhs.net

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