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| Information for Embryo Recipients |  |

Who is this leaflet for?

This leaflet aims to:

* Help prepare you for treatment with donor embryos
* Provide information about the law relating to donation and how it affects you
* Answer your questions about donors and treatment
* Encourage you to think about the issues that you might face

Who could be Embryo donor?

Patients who have completed their family, and have frozen embryos remaining in storage that they no longer wish to use for their own treatment.

Patients who donate their embryos do so voluntarily because they wish to help others, no financial incentives are involved.

Embryos for donation will be created by eggs from women aged between 18 and 35 (i.e. less than 36 years) and the sperm provider between 18 and 45 at the time the embryos were produced.

Embryos donors will have been investigated for their medical and personal history to ensure that there are no inheritable conditions that could be passed on to donor conceived offspring.

Donors are also screened for:

* Infections including HIV, HTLV, Hepatitis B, C and E
* Sexually transmitted infections like Syphilis, Gonorrhoea and Chlamydia
* Genetically inherited conditions, such as Cystic Fibrosis

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

Although donors are screened in accordance with UK guidelines, it is not possible to exclude the risk of a child being born with a genetic or hereditary disease, disorder or birth defect. In accepting embryo donation, recipients acknowledge and understand that it is not possible to prevent every genetic, infectious, or other disorder in children born from donated embryos.

How will I be matched with an embryo donor?

There is usually a waiting list for treatment. When donated embryos become available, we will contact you. In selecting a donor to offer to you, we take into account the information you have provided to us regarding your ethnicity and physical characteristics such as hair colour, eye colour, height etc. It is our policy to share with you non-identifying information that the donors have provided, to enable you to make a decision as to whether you wish to go ahead with treatment. Unfortunately, due to the current national shortage of donated embryos, there is limited choice for recipients. You do not have to accept the donated embryos we offer you, but you may have to wait before alternative embryos become available.

If I have a child, will I be able to use the same donor to create a sibling?

If you have any remaining embryos, you may be able to use them in the future to create a sibling.

What if the donor couple changes their mind?

Embryo donors consent in writing to their embryos being donated and used for the treatment of others. Donors can change or withdraw their consent up to the point that embryos are placed into the recipient’s womb. Given that fertility treatment is costly, time-consuming and emotionally and physically stressful; we ensure that all our donors understand how important it is to be really sure that they want to donate before proceeding. It is very rare for a donor to withdraw consent once they have started treatment.

What can a child born can find about the donors?

Licensed Fertility clinics are required by law to pass information about donors and donation cycles to the fertility regulator – The Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority (HFEA). Parents and/or donor conceived offspring can apply for information about their donor from the HFEA or Complete Fertility.

The following non-identifying information about the donors are potentially available to parents of donor-conceived children at any time and to donor-conceived children themselves from the age of 16:

* Physical description (height, weight, and eye, hair and skin colours)
* Year and country of birth
* Ethnic group
* Whether the donors had any genetic children when they registered, and the number and sex of those children
* Other details the donors may have chosen to supply (e.g., occupation, religion and interests)
* The ethnic group(s) of the donor’s parents
* Whether the donors were adopted or donor conceived (if they are aware of this)
* Details of relevant personal and family medical history
* Skills
* Reason for donating
* A goodwill message, and
* A description of themselves as a person (pen portrait).

From the age of 18, donor-conceived adults (conceived after April 2005) also have the right to access the following information about their donors:

* Full names (and any previous names)
* Date of birth
* Town or district of birth
* Last known postal address (or address at the time of registration)

Other information that is available to donor embryo-conceived children on application to the HFEA includes:

* Information about the possibility of being related to the person they intend to enter into an intimate physical relationship with (from the age of 16)
* Information about the possibility of being related to the person they intend to marry or enter into a civil partnership with (from the age of 16)
* Identifying information about donor-conceived genetic siblings, with mutual consent (from the age of 18)

What can we/ I know about the donor?

You’ll be able to find out:

* a physical description (height, weight, eye and hair colour)
* the year and country of birth
* their ethnicity
* whether they had any children at the time of donation, how many and their gender
* their marital status
* their medical history
* a personal description and goodwill message to any potential children (if they chose to write one at the time of their donation).

You won’t be able to find out any information that might reveal who the donor is.

Does the donor have any rights to children conceived from their donation?

If you are having treatment at a licensed fertility clinic in the UK, your donor will have no legal rights or responsibilities to any children born with their sperm, eggs or embryos. This means:

* They will have no legal obligation to any children conceived from their donation.
* They will not be named on the birth certificate.
* They will not have any rights over how the child will be brought up.
* They will not be required to support the child financially.

Consents and legal issues

It is a legal requirement that we obtain written consent from both of the intended parents before you receive donated embryos for your treatment. These will include legal parenthood consent forms (which will vary dependent on your marital status) to ensure that you are both legal parents to any child born.

The child's mother

The woman who gives birth is always considered to be the child’s legal mother. This is the case even if the treatment involved the use of donated eggs or embryos. The law only recognises one person as the legal mother of a child.

The child's father/second parent

Where the woman who gives birth is married, 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.

When the woman giving birth is not married or not 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. The consent forms must be completed by the couple receiving donated embryos prior to treatment. Both the named person and the woman giving birth must consent to that man being recognised as the legal father or that woman being the second parent of the child.

Where the woman giving birth is in a civil partnership with another woman, the legal second parent will be her civil partner, unless it can be shown that the female partner did not consent to her 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.

Where can I find out more information?

Human Fertilisation & Embryology Authority (HFEA)

The authority that regulates and monitors all licensed fertility treatments.

Website: <https://www.hfea.gov.uk/>

Donor Conception Network

A national support group, for people who have conceived through donation and those considering being donors.

Website: <http://www.dcnetwork.org/>

National Gamete Donation Trust

A national government-funded charity set up to raise awareness of and seek ways to alleviate the national shortage of sperm, egg and embryo donors. It provides useful publications for donors and recipients including information on donation and the law.

Website: <http://www.ngdt.co.uk/>

British Infertility Counselling Association (BICA)

The professional association for infertility counsellors and counselling in the UK. The website includes a list of counsellors providing specialist infertility counselling.

Website: <http://www.bica.net/>

Fertility Friends

An active self-help community for people experiencing infertility. This is a useful site featuring message boards and live chat rooms.

Website: [www.fertilityfriends.co.uk](http://www.fertilityfriends.co.uk)

What are the next steps?

After reading this leaflet, if you wish to go ahead with embryo donation, please advise us on ……………….

* You will be sent electronic consents
* A counselling appointment will be organized
* A video consultation appointment with a member of the team will be organized to fully discuss this option of creating your family