



Egg Freezing FAQ Sheet

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Egg Freezing FAQs

What is egg freezing?

Egg freezing is a method of fertility preservation that involves five phases: consultation and diagnostic testing, ovarian stimulation and monitoring, egg retrieval, cryopreservation (freezing), and finally, thawing and fertilizing those eggs to achieve a pregnancy.

What is vitrification?

Egg vitrification is a "flash freezing" method in which cells are immersed directly into liquid nitrogen, cooling them so quickly to -196°C that they become "glass-like" or "vitrified." While traditional slow freezing takes hours, vitrification is almost instant, significantly reducing the chance that ice crystals will form and damage the egg's delicate structure.

What are the chances of getting pregnant from frozen eggs?

The survival rate of eggs after freezing and thawing is over 90%. Successful fertilization rates are between 71% and 79%, and successful implantation rates vary depending on multiple factors (your age at time of freezing, age at transfer, male fertility, clinic protocol, etc.)

How long does egg freezing take?

The timeline from your initial consultation with a physician to starting your egg freezing cycle is typically around 6-8 weeks. Of course, this doesn't take into account any time you may have to wait for an available appointment - so schedule it sooner rather than later!

The egg freezing process itself only takes around 2-3 weeks.

How do you use frozen eggs to achieve pregnancy?

While some people freeze their eggs and never end up using them, the goal of most egg freezing patients is to eventually thaw and fertilize those eggs to attempt pregnancy.

Whether you choose to wait three years, five years, or ten years, your eggs will stay the same "age" as you were when you had your egg retrieval, and the process of utilizing those eggs (when you are ready) will follow these steps:

- Step 1: Eggs are carefully thawed
- Step 2: Eggs are fertilized (using sperm from male partner or sperm donor)
- Step 3: Fertilized eggs develop into embryos over the next five days
- Step 4: Embryo transfer to uterus of intended parent or surrogate
- Step 5: Wait for pregnancy test results

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What happens to my eggs if I don't use them?

If you decide not to use your frozen eggs in the future, you have a few options:

- You can discard your eggs
- You can donate your eggs to science
- You can donate your eggs to someone you know (known as "directed donation"), though additional screening will typically be required in these situations.

Eggs are single reproductive cells (or gametes) while embryos are the result of a fertilized egg that has begun to divide and develop. Some people may feel a strong attachment to their frozen eggs' potential, while others may not. Each person's experience is unique.

How many eggs will I be able to freeze?

Various factors will come into play, so results will always vary. However, a study of women with "average" ovarian reserve who had undergone egg retrieval found the following numbers:

- For ages 36 and under: About 14 mature eggs retrieved
- For ages 37-39: About 10 mature eggs retrieved
- For ages 40-42: About 9 mature eggs retrieved
- For ages 43 and over: About 7 mature eggs retrieved

Is egg freezing the same as IVF?

An egg retrieval is also the second stage of in vitro fertilization (IVF), but can be performed without subsequent egg fertilization and embryo development for those who wish to preserve oocytes (eggs) only for future use.

How much does egg freezing cost?

Egg freezing can cost up to \$30,000+, but the average cost is around \$11,000, with the typical range being \$8,000 to \$15,000 per cycle (if you pay out-of-pocket). Keep in mind storage fees will cost you anywhere from \$500 to \$1,000 annually.



Learn more about egg freezing
by visiting illumefertility.com