

**Egg Freezing**  
Oocyte Cryopreservation



**TAKE CONTROL**

Set your own Biological Clock



# How to talk to your doctor?

## A Guide to Effective Communication

The Egg Freezing Process: from Stimulation to Cryopreservation and beyond.

# A few questions to ask your doctor

When you finally sit down for your egg freezing (oocyte cryopreservation) consultation, your doctor at the Fertility & IVF Center of Miami will have some questions for you: your last period, health history, height and weight ratio (BMI), your expectations and this is also your opportunity to get first hand information, such as the Center's experience with egg freezing, storage, fees and what exactly happens to the unused eggs. You'll probably have lots of questions, but unless you write them down chances are you will forget them. We've prepared a preliminary list for you. Feel free to add your questions. Be as prepared as possible to make the most of your first appointment.



**TIP:** Don't be worried about asking questions. This is your doctor's job and most questions have likely been asked before.

Here are some questions you may want to ask your doctor:

## Technology

### What egg freezing method do you use?

### Why do you prefer this method?

There are two ways you can freeze an egg; slow freeze or fast freeze (also known as vitrification).

Vitrification is an ultra-rapid process that inhibits the formation of ice crystals. Eggs have high water content so ice crystals can form. With slow egg freezing, ice crystals are likely to form, and when the eggs are thawed, those ice crystals can fracture and damage the egg. Evidence shows that the slow-freezing techniques that have been used for decades are not as successful as the newer vitrification method. The vitrification method also involves the use of cryoprotectants for cell preservation; these substances protect tissue from freezing damage.

### Is this an experimental procedure?

Since 1980's scientists have been working to improve the process of freezing unfertilized eggs. By the mid- 1990's success rates were reported and healthy babies were being born from this procedure. In October 2012, The American Society for Reproductive Medicine (ASRM) lifted the experimental label from the technology, citing success rates in live births, among other findings.

### How long can the eggs remain frozen and viable?

Since egg freezing is a new technology, it is not known how long eggs can remain frozen. We expect that frozen eggs should remain viable for 10 or more years.

## Our experience

### When was this Fertility Center established?

The Fertility Center of Miami was founded in 1991. The Center has been in the forefront of offering the latest successful options to infertile couples. In the past this has included intracytoplasmic sperm injection (ICSI), blastocyst embryo transfer, blastocyst embryo cryopreservation, donor eggs, and now egg freezing.

### What is our experience?

While many centers offer as a service, few have hands on experience with freezing, thawing and subsequent transfer of embryos. Our experience has proven that our embryologists and physicians have the knowledge, skills and competence to be successful.

### What is your egg thaw survival rate?

On average, up to 80% of the cryopreserved eggs will survive the thawing process. Approximately 75% of these successfully thawed eggs will be fertilized. In other words, if 10 eggs are frozen, and thawed, about 8 will survive and on average 6 of them will successfully be fertilized. The better the facility is at successfully thawing eggs, the better your chances for fertilization, transfer, and establishing an ongoing pregnancy.

## Are all eggs retrieved in a cycle of IVF acceptable for freezing?

No, with any retrieval you get a mixture of good quality and poor quality eggs. Only good quality mature eggs are acceptable for freezing. In general the doctor will decide a stimulation protocol that is custom tailored to the patient to manage the number and quality of eggs retrieved.

## Is one cycle of egg retrieval and freezing enough?

While you might visualize going through one single cycle, there's always the possibility that the needed amount of eggs may not be retrieved during the first cycle, and you may need a second cycle. At the Fertility & IVF Center of Miami we offer single or multi-cycle procedure programs.

## Facilities

Where are the frozen eggs stored?

Your eggs are stored in individual cryolocks (straw like device specifically prepared for the purpose of freezing human eggs) which reside in liquid nitrogen filled cryo tank. In general 1-3 eggs are cryopreserved in each cryolock. For long term safety, the eggs are transferred to a third party storage facility. These are offsite from our offices and provide security and safety for long term storage.

## Cost

We are extremely competitive in our pricing for a cycle of egg freezing. For women who require more than one cycle of egg harvesting, additional discounts may apply.

## What are the fees for storing the eggs?

A third party offers storage. Fees can range from \$400-\$500 per year.

## Facts

### What is the average number of eggs needed?

The average number of eggs retrieved during a cycle for egg freezing ranges from around 5 to 20, depending on the woman's age. Women under age 37 should freeze 12-20 eggs; women between the ages of 37 and 39 should ideally freeze about 20; and women 40 and over should freeze more than 20. It's important to remember that no specific number of eggs will guarantee success, and the probability of success depends on your unique situation. You may need to undergo more than one egg freezing cycle in order to get enough eggs. Remember, pregnancy rates depend on your age and ovarian reserve at the time of egg retrieval and freezing.

## How and when will the fertility clinic dispose of your unused eggs?

### Can I donate?

Remember, these are your eggs, and it's your decision what happens to them. Be sure to fully review the Fertility & IVF Center of Miami's consent form and discuss with your doctor exactly what you would like done with your unused eggs. Some women choose to donate them to other individuals looking to have a child, while others donate theirs to science for research purposes, and others just ask for them to be discarded.

### If you are thinking about freezing your eggs, please consider also asking about the following issues.

What medications are used to stimulate prior to egg retrieval?

- What are the expenses involved for the medications and required monitoring?
- Can the frozen eggs be sent to another clinic if needed?
- Can pre-implantation genetic (PGD) screening be done on the eggs or embryos before transfer?
- Based on my individual history, how many eggs do you think you can retrieve? Is this above or below average?
- What are the potential risks involved?
- Do you have anything else further to add?

The most effective resource in medicine doesn't need trials, phases or approvals. It's free and has no side effects. It is called awareness.

The doctors and staff at the Fertility Center of Miami will be more than happy to answer all your questions.

## Write your own questions

**(and don't forget to ask your doctor)**



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Helping YOU Make a Baby



Contact us today to discuss if **Egg Freezing** is the right step for you.



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