

Embryo donation

Some couples may need to consider embryo donation due to egg and sperm problems. Virtus Fertility Centre's specialist team can facilitate this process.

Legal considerations

In Singapore it is illegal to have a commercial (buy or sell) arrangement for human tissue, including sperm, eggs and embryos. Under current Singapore law, a child born from a donated egg or sperm is deemed to be the child of the birth mother. Donors can be assured that they will be under no legal or financial obligation to the child.

Virtus Fertility Centre believes it is in the best interests of the child to have the ability, on attaining 18 years of age, to find out about their biological parents if they wish to. It is up to the 'recipients' ie parents of the child to explain, when they feel appropriate, the way in which the child was conceived. Our experience shows the more openly available the information for children conceived via donated sperm and eggs, the more successful the outcome for everyone.

Virtus Fertility Centre is mindful of the emotional and legal implications of donors, recipients and potential children and we are continually reviewing our program to meet the needs of our patients and that of the wider community.

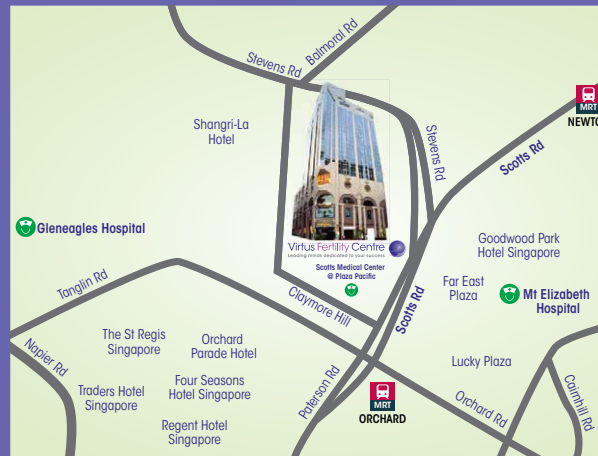
Costs

Given that the donor is providing eggs or sperm the recipient couple covers all the donor's out-of-pocket medical expenses. Recipient's costs are in line with those of any patient accessing Virtus Fertility Centre's treatments.



Virtus Fertility Centre

9 Scotts Road Units #09-01 to 05
Scotts Medical Center @ Pacific Plaza Singapore 228210
T +65 6460 4555 F +65 6235 0380
enquiries@virtusfertilitycentre.com.sg



Find us

MRT Station Nearest is Orchard MRT Station
Bus Stop Alight @ Royal Plaza Hotel
Bus Nos. 5, 54, 124, 128, 143, 162, 162M, 167, 171, 700, 700A, NR1, NR2, NR3
Parking Available in the basement of Pacific Plaza
*Entrance via Claymore Hill

Donor Program



virtusfertilitycentre.com.sg



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A MEMBER OF VIRTUS HEALTH



Virtus Fertility Centre is an experienced fertility clinic providing a comprehensive and supportive donor program to assist people needing donor gametes (eggs or sperm) or embryos.

Despite the relatively simple medical procedures, sperm, egg and embryo donations are complex emotional processes and extensive counselling and consultation is undertaken to ensure both donors and recipients have considered all the issues.

Donors may be 'known' to the recipients (possibly a friend or family member) or de-identified (although traceable).

The identity of the de-identified donors is not known to the recipient. However, in the future, the legislation may require the donor to give explicit written consent to providing identifying information to any offspring from his donation once they reach the age of 18 years of age.

All donors must give written informed consent to their name being included on and supplying medical information to the Singapore Register, held by the Ministry of Health.

Openness is also more likely to lead to long term emotional and psychological strength of the donors and recipients (parents) and potential children, so we insist on counselling of all parties before a donor cycle is undertaken.

De-identified and known donors are essential to ensure the continuity of this very successful program.

Need for donor eggs

All women are born with a finite supply of around 2 million eggs and this number declines with age. Originally, recipients of egg donation were primarily women who had experienced premature ovarian failure (menopause). This premature menopause may be caused by genetic reasons, sometimes surgery, or, most often, unknown reasons.

More recently, the largest group requesting egg donation is women in their late 30s/40s. These women have undergone several attempts of routine IVF without success and the scientific evidence suggests that the eggs they are producing are not suitable for developing healthy embryos.

For women who may not have healthy eggs or in fact have no eggs the only option for them to achieve a pregnancy is by using donated eggs (or embryos). Virtus Fertility Centre does not offer a donor service for women beyond the age of natural menopause (51 years) or to someone whose health could be compromised by a pregnancy.

All egg donations at Virtus Fertility Centre are through known donation where the recipient recruits an egg donor through family and friends.

Considering becoming an egg donor?

Women who have a plentiful supply of available eggs and are willing to donate them altruistically to those in need, may consider becoming an egg donor.

Donors are ideally aged between 21 and 38 years of age, who have usually completed their own family and want to facilitate pregnancy for another woman. A genetic, social and medical history (including blood tests) is needed from the donor before acceptance. There are significant screening tests undertaken on the donor including blood group, Hep B, Hep C, cystic fibrosis, syphilis, chlamydia, chromosome analysis and HIV status.

Egg donors need to be prepared to discuss and provide the following types of information:

- Medical history – advising of all known allergies
- Physical description
- Social/Lifestyle declaration – including details of any donation at other assisted reproductive treatment clinics.

The pregnancy rate of donor egg treatment is directly related to the age of the donor, number and quality of donated eggs.

How are eggs donated?

Following an initial specialist consultation, counselling of both the recipient and donor is the next step. We discuss legal, social, genetic and moral implications of the donation as well as the medical related health checks and procedures involved.

A medical check is undertaken on the donor before undergoing an 'IVF cycle' to facilitate the collection of her eggs. They are then fertilised and transferred to the recipient.

The donor is given medication to stimulate her ovaries to produce an optimum number of eggs. The recipient begins taking oestrogen and progesterone to prepare the lining of her uterus. Blood tests and vaginal ultrasounds monitor the donor and alert us to collect the eggs (just prior to the donor ovulating). The egg collection is done in a day surgery using a light general anaesthetic to ensure the woman is comfortable.

At the time of egg collection the recipient's partner (or donor) provides semen which is used to fertilise the eggs in the laboratory. Traditionally the embryos are allowed to develop for 3 – 5 days before one or two are transferred to the recipient. Any other viable embryos are frozen for potential future attempts. After a two week wait a pregnancy test is undertaken.

Need for donor sperm

Although the last decade has seen significant improvements in the methods of surgically collecting and utilising very small numbers of sperm, there are still situations where too few, abnormal or no sperm are available and this is when donor sperm is required.

There are significant screening tests undertaken on sperm donors including blood group, Hep B, Hep C, cystic fibrosis, syphilis, chlamydia, chromosome analysis and HIV status. The sperm is stored for three months at which point the donor's blood is tested again for infectious diseases before a sample is used.

Virtus Fertility Centre currently aims to provide enough sperm from one donor for a family so if siblings are desired they have the same biological father. Sperm from one donor is currently able to create a maximum of 3 families.