



Medically reviewed by a Provider  
at South Jersey Fertility Center



South Jersey  
Fertility Center

## ***Egg Freezing: Building your Future Family***

Now more than ever, women are choosing to have children later in life. We believe in empowering you to make the choice to preserve your fertility and start your family when you're ready – **on your terms.**

## *Egg Freezing: Building your Future Family*

It's no secret that aging impacts fertility, which is why egg/embryo freezing is becoming more common. Egg/embryo freezing allows you to take control of your reproductive health and future.

### *When Is the Best Time to Freeze My Eggs?*

It's best to consider freezing your eggs during your prime reproductive years, as the quality and quantity of eggs begins to decline with age. Generally, your 20s and early 30s are an optimal time as you have a higher number of healthier eggs.

### *How Does Egg/Embryo Freezing Work?*

Eggs, or embryos, are safely cryopreserved and stored in tanks with liquid nitrogen. This allows eggs/embryos to remain at the quality they were at time of freezing. To get eggs/embryos to store, women undergo similar treatment to an In Vitro Fertilization (IVF) cycle. This starts with some basic testing to ensure you are a candidate. Testing typically includes a transvaginal ultrasound and bloodwork to evaluate how many eggs are available in the ovaries that may respond to medication and be retrieved.

Once testing is completed you have the green light to get started! The goal of any IVF cycle is to induce follicles in the ovaries to grow and to retrieve the maximum number of eggs within a single cycle. This is the same case when it comes to egg or embryo freezing.

In typical menstrual cycles, your body develops one mature egg per cycle. With IVF medication, you develop multiple mature eggs within one single cycle.

### *The Egg Freezing Process, Simplified.*

Generally, this whole process involves three steps and takes an estimated three months from your first consultation to your egg retrieval.

- 1 Ovarian Stimulation:** You will administer injectable medicines at home that help stimulate the follicles in your ovaries to grow and mature (usually for about 9-12 days). During this time, you are monitored by ultrasound and bloodwork frequently, to ensure your fertility doctor can adjust medication as needed and properly schedule your egg retrieval.

**2** **Egg Retrieval:** During the egg retrieval process, a vaginal ultrasound probe is safely inserted into the ovaries and used to retrieve the eggs. You will be given sedation (twilight anesthesia) during the procedure, so you won't experience pain or discomfort. This procedure is done onsite at your fertility practice, and you can go home a few hours after your retrieval is completed.

**3** **Cryopreservation:** After the retrieval, mature eggs are safely frozen and stored for future use. If you are opting to freeze embryos, the process involves fertilizing eggs in a lab with your partner's sperm and waiting for them to develop for several days before freezing. Usually five days after fertilization, they reach an optimal point of development (the blastocyst stage) and are safely frozen. Both embryos and eggs are stored in liquid nitrogen cryopreservation tanks that are closely monitored to maintain the correct temperature.

## *How Long Can My Eggs Be Stored For?*

In most circumstances, eggs can be stored for many years without any concern. There are documented cases of women using eggs that were frozen for ten years with success!

## *What Happens When I Decide to Use My Eggs?*

When you are ready to get pregnant, your fertility center will check your uterus to make sure it is healthy and can give the best chance of pregnancy, as you prepare for a process called frozen embryo transfer (FET). Your eggs will become embryos prior to transfer.

## *Steps to Prepare for Transfer*

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**1. Uterine lining prep:** To prepare the uterine lining for the embryo, estrogen medications are given to increase thickness in the uterine lining. This mimics what happens in a standard menstrual cycle, when your uterus is preparing itself for embryo implantation. Your fertility doctor will bring you in for an appointment prior to transfer to ensure your lining is at the right measurement (7-10mm is ideal!)



**2. Egg thaw and fertilization:** In a carefully timed schedule, eggs are thawed prior to your transfer, allowing time for them to fertilize with sperm. Once your eggs and embryos turn into a blastocyst stage embryo, you are ready for your transfer!

OR



**3. Embryo thaw:** If you've chosen to freeze embryos instead of eggs, the highest quality embryo(s) are thawed the day of your scheduled transfer. Embryologists will ensure that the embryo has properly thawed and is still viable prior to transfer. You will be counseled prior to your transfer on how many embryos are recommended to thaw at one time.

*\*In general, egg and embryo freezing have similar success rates. Embryo freezing is slightly more successful compared to egg freezing alone, as it allows for preimplantation genetic testing opportunities and a better understanding of quality prior to cryopreservation.*



**4. Transfer:** The transfer itself is a very simple process where a fertility doctor carefully places the embryo into the uterus for implantation. This is a noninvasive procedure that is done comfortably in-office, and only takes a few minutes from start to finish. The embryologists prepare the embryo, and then your fertility doctor gently places the embryo into the uterus using a tiny catheter.



**5. Pregnancy test:** Approximately ten days after transfer, bloodwork is drawn to confirm pregnancy. If pregnancy is established, your fertility care team will monitor you throughout the early stages of your pregnancy until it is time to “graduate” to your OB/GYN office. If your embryo transfer is unfortunately not successful, you will be directed to discontinue any medications you are on and wait for your period. On the onset of your period, you can prepare for another embryo transfer. Your fertility doctor may also have a consultation with you if your first transfer is unsuccessful to discuss alternate protocols. The most recent national data shows that there is a 49% success rate per new patient at respective fertility clinics across the country. There are specific success rates available per fertility clinic via [sart.org](http://sart.org).

## What Happens If I Don't Want to Use My Frozen Eggs or Embryos?

In most circumstances, eggs can be stored for many years without any concern. If you freeze eggs or embryos for the future and ultimately decide that you do not want to use

them, that choice is yours! You can discard your eggs or donate them to research. For embryos, if both parties agree, you have the same options as eggs. Additionally, those with frozen embryos can also anonymously donate them to another couple within the fertility practice.

*There's currently a lot of discussion about laws related to embryos. As of June 2024, no changes have been made to the options we offer to help you achieve your family building goals.*

We're proud to be able to offer women the ability to control their family building timeline and provide a sense of security for their futures.

## **Take Control of Your Future Family Planning.**

**We empower you to take the first step:** Contact us to schedule your consultation and discuss your options with one of our board-certified fertility experts.



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# IVF Medication Tracker

Cycle  
Number

Start  
Date

Stims Day			1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
Medication	Dose	AM PM															

Notes: \_\_\_\_\_  
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