



Gamete & Embryo Preservation

Not yet ready to start a family?

*Keep your options open through
cryopreservation*



Bridge Clinic
Fertility Centre

www.thebridgeclinic.com

What is Cryopreservation?

This is a method of storing human gametes (eggs and sperm) or embryos from an IVF cycle for later use, by freezing and storing them at very low temperatures. There are two methods of freezing embryos. These are known as 'slow freezing' and 'vitrification' also known as rapid freeze protocols.

At Bridge Clinic, we use the vitrification method in a closed system – ensuring no cross-contamination happens in cryo-storage. All the embryos are stored in liquid nitrogen vessels which are held at -196°C.

Over the next few pages we'll aim to answer a few of your most pressing questions.



How does cryopreservation work for women?



1 Increase egg production

To get started, you would need to be on hormonal treatment and other fertility medications to increase your number of eggs produced.

2 Egg collection

The next step is that your fertility doctor will assist with collecting your eggs through your vagina with the aid of an ultrasound machine in a procedure called Ultrasound Directed Follicular Aspiration (UDFA) to ensure accuracy.

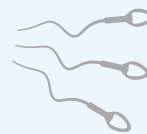


3 Spare embryo freezing

After fertilization through IVF, some clients may have spare embryos. The spare embryos that are of good quality can be frozen for use in a subsequent cycle (if the woman does not get pregnant in the initial cycle).



How does cryopreservation work for men?



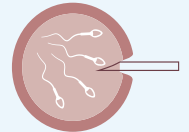
1 Semen collection

Masturbation is the most common and easiest method for producing semen samples intended for sperm banking. The specific parameters examined within a semen sample are;

- ✓ Sperm quantity (count)
- ✓ Sperm shape (morphology)
- ✓ Sperm movement (motility)

Surgical sperm collection

Where there is no sperm present in the sample or in instances where you are unable to ejaculate, the alternative is to surgically remove sperm directly from the testicle otherwise known as surgical sperm collection.



2 Semen freezing

Afterward, the samples are placed in vials to be frozen (or cryopreserved) using cryoprotective agent aka special "anti-freeze" agents to ensure the sperm cells remain viable in the IVF/andrology lab or where they are stored till they are required for IVF or IUI procedures.



How do I qualify for Cryopreservation?

You are a prime candidate for cryopreservation if you are not yet ready to start a family due to career demands, financial challenges, or your single status by the age of 35.

- ✔ Individuals (men & women) who wish to complete career and/or personal goals before having a baby
- ✔ Individuals (men & women) facing a recent cancer diagnosis or who will soon undergo chemotherapy
- ✔ Individuals (men & women) facing major reproductive surgery
- ✔ Individuals (men & women) who take medications that affect fertility
- ✔ Women who have not yet found the right partner
- ✔ Women with premature ovarian failure (POF), sometimes called early menopause
- ✔ Couples with extra gametes during an IVF Procedure

What are the benefits of Cryopreservation to me?

The benefits that abound for individuals looking to cryopreserve their gametes or embryos fall into the following two main categories.

Medical benefits



Congenital or Hereditary Condition

You have a pre-existing condition that can affect your fertility such as Premature Ovarian Failure caused by gonadal dysgenesis and mosaic Turner syndrome.



Illness

You need treatment for endometriosis, cancer or another illness that can affect your ability to get pregnant. Certain medical treatments — such as radiation or chemotherapy — can harm your fertility. Egg freezing before treatment might enable you to have biological children later.

Prior notice of at least 1 month must be given to the clinic before freezing.



Fertility treatment

When undergoing In Vitro Fertilization (IVF), some people prefer gamete freezing to embryo freezing for religious or ethical reasons. It also increases the efficiency of assisted reproductive treatments as it enables all unused cells retrieved and/or fertilised in one treatment cycle, to be stored for a future treatment cycle. This reduces the need for practitioners to perform ovarian stimulation and oocyte retrieval, even when sperm required for fertilization is unavailable. Both processes are expensive and physically taxing for the women involved.



Reduced risk of ovarian hyperstimulation syndrome

Cryopreserving embryos from one cycle to the next means that ovarian stimulation is not necessary each time a treatment cycle is commenced and that if the woman's ovaries are hyperstimulated, embryo transfer can be delayed without wasting retrieved oocytes.



Reduces the implantation of multiple embryos

Implanting multiple embryos per cycle carries health risks to both the pregnant woman and her foetus/es, including the risk of multiple pregnancies and associated risks such as miscarriage and low birth weight.



Fertility preservation

Cryopreservation enables individuals whose fertility is threatened or those repeating their IVF cycles preserve their reproductive cells and have spare gametes so that they have the option of conceiving using assisted techniques in the future. You also do not need to use donor eggs even if you are in or past your late 30s. The biological clock cannot intimidate you because your eggs are intact till you are ready!

Did you know your chances of conceiving naturally decline as you get older?



Social or elective benefits



Education

Certain educational pursuits may take prolonged time before completion and women who find themselves in such a situation can take advantage of this by preserving their eggs until they are ready to start a family.



Career

Career pursuits could be time-demanding until a certain level when you are up the ladder or, well, basically running your dreams on autopilot. When things have gotten fairly stable, you can consider starting a family.



Delayed Parenthood

You wish to preserve younger eggs now for future use. Freezing eggs at a younger age might help you get pregnant when you are ready.



Finding Mr. Right

Sometimes, some ladies take a little longer than others to find their own match-made-in-heaven. When time begins to pass, the smart option is cryopreservation of her eggs. That way, she can start her family with Mr. Perfect without using donor eggs.

**Are you considering preserving your eggs until you are ready to start a family?
Book an appointment today!**

Why Bridge Clinic?

Quality protocols observed during our cryopreservation process

If you are considering freezing your gametes, choose your trusted fertility clinic with expertise in the field.

- ✓ Gametes are stored at -196°C in liquid nitrogen which is monitored in line with a strict protocol of weekly checks.
- ✓ Gametes are properly stored and accounted for in line with our traceability and labelling protocol which ensures there is a double-witnessing process to prevent gamete or embryo mix up.
- ✓ Gametes are in a highly quarantined zone at our facility to ensure they are never accessed by non-authorized personnel.
- ✓ Gametes of persons infected with Hepatitis B are quarantined (stored separately) in our world-class cryobank in line with international guiding principles to prevent cross infection/contamination of samples.



Quality Assurance

Bridge Clinic has the capacity to store gametes for up to 10 years. Frozen sperm, oocytes and embryos do not age and they allow us to store reproductive tissue for many years!

Preserve your younger
gametes now.

Safeguard your future family.

Contact us:

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