

Fertility Preservation

Options for Gender-Diverse Individuals

What is fertility preservation:

Hormone Replacement Therapy (HRT) and/or some gender affirming surgeries can make it difficult to get pregnant or make someone get pregnant. Before starting any gender affirming medical intervention, some people will take steps to make it more likely to have biological children in the future. This is known as fertility preservation.

Our Gender Health clinic nurse or social worker can talk with you further about this process, even if you are not sure right now.

When do I start:

It would be best practice to talk with your doctor about fertility preservation before starting HRT. Getting an early start could shorten the process and it may make it more successful.

If you do want to preserve sperm or eggs, you must do this before having any surgery that would remove ovaries or testes.

Already taking HRT?

It is possible to preserve sperm or eggs after starting HRT. This will vary from person to person. Our Gender Health clinic doctor can discuss this further with you and help you understand what may be best based on your own needs.

- **Testosterone:** You will need to stop taking testosterone for a few months, and you will have to take other hormones during the egg collection process. Our doctor can talk with you about re-starting the process when it is time
- **Estrogen or Spironolactone:** You will probably need to stop taking both for a few months. Our doctor can talk with you about re-starting the process when it is time

Taking puberty blockers?

You will need to stop your blocker and go through your birth-assigned puberty for a certain amount of time before you can store your sperm or eggs. Our doctor can talk with you about this process and help you plan if this is the right option for you.

Looking at all the options:

It is completely normal if you are not sure about biological children or you do not want biological children. It is also normal to change your mind about having biological children, which is why some people consider saving sperm or eggs. Most transgender adult reports they wish there had been a conversation with their doctor prior to starting HRT so they know what options existed.

As always, there are plenty of ways to become a parent without your own sperm or eggs—there is no wrong or right way to become a parent. People consider adopter, foster care, surrogacy, and many other ways. Costs related to adoption vary significantly for various reasons. Saving sperm or eggs are just other options for having children in the future.

Collecting Sperm or Eggs:

- **If you are someone who has testicles:** Usually, you must provide at least 1 sperm sample at the fertility clinic by ejaculating into a container. You may be asked to provide more than 1 sample over many weeks. If you are not comfortable doing this at a clinic, there may be a home kit you can buy to use at home. *Always ask the fertility clinic about all your options.*
- **If you are someone who has ovaries:** Usually, you must take medicine for 10-14 days to stimulate egg production. You will have several visits to the clinic to check on your progress. The clinic will collect eggs through a small procedure. This process is at least one month, sometimes longer. *Always ask the fertility clinic about all your options.*

Average Cost:

In most cases, insurance will not cover fertility preservation. You may have to pay for the cost of collecting and freezing sperms or eggs (which is the preservation process). Contacting your insurance company to discuss any options of covering fertility preservation may be helpful. In addition, know that there is a yearly storage fee to keep your sperm or eggs at the fertility clinic. *The fertility clinic can discuss exact cost and what is included in these costs when you call them.* Check with the fertility clinic as there could be financial aid packages, as well as payment plans.

- **Sperm Banking:** \$400-\$1,000
- **Sperm Storage:** \$140-\$600/year
- **Egg Freezing:** \$10,000-\$15,000
- **Egg Storage:** \$300-\$600/year

Resources for fertility preservation:

These are some clinics that offer fertility preservation for both sperm and egg.

Overlake Reproductive Health
11232 NE 15th St, Suite #201, Bellevue 98004
P: 425-646-4700
W: <https://fertileweb.com>

Seattle Reproductive Medicine
Located in Seattle, Everett, Kirkland, Tacoma, Spokane, and the Tri-Cities
P: 206-301-5000
W: <https://seattlefertility.com>

Pacific Northwest Fertility
Located in Seattle and Bellevue
P: 206-515-0000
W: <https://pnwfertility.com/>



Taking the time to discuss options with your care providers (i.e. doctors, nurses, therapist, etc) will help you navigate the process of deciding what is best for you. Fertility preservation is a major decision that should take some time to think through. Remember, there is no right or wrong way to become a parent; knowing all your options only provides further education.