



# Fertility Preservation for Trans Women: Sperm Banking

















# I am a trans woman partnered with a woman, how can my samples be used in the future?

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If you are partnered with or intend to partner with a woman you will bank your sperm as a Client Depositor. A Client Depositor (CD) is someone banking their sperm for use in the future with a sexually intimate partner. Typically this will require you to complete some paper work, including a storage agreement. You will be asked to provide blood test results for several infectious diseases or can have those tests drawn on-site at the sperm bank or clinic. Then you will provide a semen sample that will be analyzed, processed, and stored.

When you and your female partner are ready to begin the process of having children, your partner should see a physician to determine her fertility. The physician will suggest the best plan for achieving pregnancy while considering the amount of sperm you have banked.

The banked sperm can be used for an intracervical insemination where the semen sample is thawed, drawn up into a catheter and inserted into your partner's vagina. The semen is placed on the cervix where the sperm will travel into the uterus up to the fallopian tubes to fertilize the egg. The banked sperm can also be washed and used for intrauterine insemination where the catheter is inserted through the cervix into the uterus. If the physician advises in vitro fertilization, the banked sperm will be used with eggs harvested from your partner to fertilize in a petri dish. The resulting embryo will then be transferred into your partner's uterus. Intra-cytoplasmic sperm injection can also be used if necessary. This would be used if there is a very low sperm count or immotile sperm. This process requires that eggs be harvested from your female partner, then healthy eggs are chosen and a single sperm is inserted directly into the egg. An embryo would then be transferred into your partner's uterus.

# Why do I need to provide blood test results or have my blood drawn if my samples will be used with a sexually intimate partner?

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This testing is required to determine how your sperm samples will be stored. If all of the tests are non-reactive, your sample will be stored in non-quarantine tanks. If any tests are reactive or if you do not provide test results, your samples will be required to be stored in quarantine, which can be more costly.



# I am a trans woman partnered with a man, how can my samples be used in the future?

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If you are partnered with a male or intend to partner with a male, you will be a Directed Donor (DD). You would also be a DD if you proceed as a single woman building a family using a surrogate or gestational carrier (GC). A DD is a person banking sperm for use with a non-sexually intimate person. Because your sperm would be used for pregnancy in a surrogate or GC with whom you are not sexually intimate, regulatory agencies require more testing. You will be required to complete a medical history form, infectious disease testing, a physical exam, and risk assessment. The sperm bank or clinic will outline the specific requirements of their program including the costs associated.

If all of your infectious disease test results are non-reactive, your sample can be stored in non-quarantine. If you have a reactive test results, the samples would be stored in quarantine, which is more costly.

Depending on the state in which your physician practices, there may be a required six month quarantine period before samples can be released. If this is the case, you need follow up blood tests that will “release” the specimens from that quarantine period. Some physicians and or states may require other periods of quarantine, such as three months. Be sure to clarify with the sperm bank, clinic and physician so you can plan your time line accurately.

# I am a trans woman partnered with a man, how can my samples be used in the future? Continued

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You will need to choose a surrogate or a GC. A surrogate is donating an egg for fertilization and will carry the pregnancy. The banked sperm will be thawed and used for either intracervical insemination or washed for intrauterine insemination, as described above.

If you opt for a gestational carrier you will need to start with an egg donor from an egg bank or clinic. The egg will be fertilized in vitro using your thawed banked sperm. The resulting embryo would be transferred into the gestational carrier for the pregnancy.

If you will be using a surrogate or gestational carrier you should work with an attorney to establish all of the required legal paper work necessary to determine parentage, and to ensure that all agreements are in order for a smooth process.

# Reference

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Szell, A., Bierbaum, R., Hazelrigg, B., & Chetkowski, R. (2013). Live births from frozen human semen stored for 40 years. *Journal of Assisted Reproduction and Genetics* , 30(6), 743-744.