

# International Egg Recipient



## Information for Patients and Partners



## Who is this leaflet about and who is it for?

This leaflet is produced for women who require donated eggs.

## What is 'egg donation'?

Egg donation means that the eggs of a donor are harvested via IVF treatment and given to patients who need donated eggs in order to achieve a pregnancy.

## Why would I need to receive donated eggs?

You may need donated eggs for the following reasons

- Your ovaries do not produce their own eggs (premature menopause, Turners syndrome, after chemo/radiotherapy)
- You do not have any ovaries
- You have a genetic problem which causes miscarriage or can be passed onto your children
- You have undergone unsuccessful IVF treatment due to poor egg quality

## What is the international egg donation programme?

As there is a shortage of egg donors in the UK and waiting lists for UK donors are quite long, we are working with our partner clinic in Alicante, Spain. The Instituto Bernabeu has had a well-established egg donation programme for over 15 years. They are regulated under Spanish Fertility Laws and hold ISO International Standards Organisation accreditation. They have around 500 egg donors on their list waiting to donate. This programme is only available for privately funded treatment.

# Who can be an egg donor in Spain?

Egg donor must be

- Between 18 and 35
- Fit and healthy
- No history of transmissible disease
- No personal or family history of inheritable disorders.
- No psychological disorders

Egg donors are women who chose to donate their eggs out of kindness to enable other women to have a child.

## What preparation is needed to receive donated eggs?

You will need an appointment with the consultant to have your medical histories taken and blood tests arranged to ensure you are healthy and to enable us to match you to a donor. The tests include:

- Screening for infections such as hepatitis B&C, HIV, Syphilis, and cytomegalovirus (CMV).
- CMV positive donors are only to be used for CMV positive recipients.
- Other tests may be required according to ethnicity/ geography/ medical history, such as HTLV, Tay Sachs, Sickle Cell,  $\alpha$  or  $\beta$  Thalassaemia, glucose-6-phosphate dehydrogenase deficiency, Malaria, T. Cruzi.
- Screening to ensure you have been vaccinated against German Measles (rubella).
- Full Blood Count
- Chlamydia & gonorrhoea

The above health screening is clinic policy for infection prevention and welfare of the child considerations. This means that patients and partners will be required to undergo screening, even if they are not

providing gametes. For self-funding patients, the costs of the tests are outlined on our price list which is available online.

Your partner will need to provide a semen sample.

If aged 40 to 44 you will need a mammogram.

If aged 45 and above you will also need an ECG, Cardiac Echo, and a general health check by your GP.

## What happens next?

If your investigations show that you are suitable to undergo treatment with egg donation, then we will arrange an appointment with the consultant to plan the treatment and a counselling appointment to discuss the implications for you and your family in using donated eggs.

## What treatment will I undergo?

The Medical staff in Spain will assess your personal situation and e-mail your plan of treatment which will inform us which medication to prescribe for you and when you need to take it.

You will have an ultrasound scan to check your womb lining thickness prior to going out to Spain.

You will be kept up to date about your donor's progress by e-mail from the clinic in Spain.

Your partner will need to travel to Spain on the day of the egg collection to produce a semen sample. If he wishes he can travel before this and produce a sample to be frozen. The following day you will be contacted by the laboratory staff to let you know if and how many embryos have fertilised. One or two embryos will be transferred on Day 3 or 5 after retrieval dependent on the number and quality of your embryos.

## Getting to Spain

Regular daily flights are available from local airports to Alicante.

A list of hotels near the Spanish clinic will be given to you for you to book.

Staff from the Spanish clinic will meet you at the airport in Alicante.

**DO NOT BOOK YOUR FLIGHTS OR ACCOMMODATION UNTIL YOU KNOW THE DATE FOR EMBRYO TRANSFER**

## How do the embryos get implanted?

You will need to travel to Spain for the implantation and you can be accompanied by your partner or family member/friend as you choose.

The procedure will involve a speculum being inserted into the vagina to access the neck of the womb (cervix), which is cleaned prior to embryo transfer. A fine tube (catheter) containing the embryos will then be passed through the cervix into the womb cavity and the embryos will be transferred. The catheter is then checked by the embryologist to ensure that the embryos are inside the womb.

Any surplus embryos may be frozen for your future use. Due to differences in UK and Spanish law all future treatments must be in Spain as no embryos or sperm can be exported to the UK.

## What happens after the embryos are implanted?

You will continue with the oestrogen tablets and the progesterone pessaries. You will be given an appointment in two weeks time to attend the Leicester Fertility Centre for a pregnancy test.

## What will I know about the donor?

Your donor will be matched by the medical Staff at Instituto Bernabeu to match your facial features and medical characteristics as closely as possible. You will be told the age of your donor and their blood group. However, under Spanish Law you will not be given this information until after the embryo has been transferred.

Egg Donation in Spain is anonymous so no further information about the donor will be available to yourselves or any resulting child.

## Other considerations

The increasing popularity of direct-to-consumer DNA testing has made it possible for donors and donor-conceived people to become identifiable to each other outside of the current, managed system of information provision. This can happen if they, or a close family relative, sign up to such a service that allows for genetic matching. Many people undergo these DNA tests to learn more about their family heritage, however it has introduced the possibility of a donor or donor-conceived person (or a close relative) of being matched with one another. This can result in a donor-conceived person who has previously been aware of their origins discovering this for the first time.

The egg donor will not be the legal parent of any resulting child(ren) and will relinquish all legal rights and responsibilities towards the child(ren).

The egg donor may vary or withdraw consent to donation up to the point that the eggs, or embryos created using the eggs, are used in treatment.

If I withdraw from the international egg recipient programme, I will not be entitled to a refund.

## What can go wrong?

There is a small risk of bleeding and very small risk of infection as the catheter is inserted into the womb.

There is a 1.5% risk of conceiving identical twins after having a single embryo put back. The risk of conceiving twins from two embryos depends on the quality of the embryos put back into your womb with average risk of 10%.

Some research studies suggested an increase in the risk of pre-eclampsia (high blood pressure during pregnancy) in donor conceptions.

Although donors are screened for infectious and heritable diseases, there is always a small risk as some conditions cannot be tested for currently or may become apparent in the donor at some time in the future. Recipients also need to be aware of the lack of a quarantine period when receiving eggs for use in a fresh transfer.

If the donor under responds to the fertility medication, the cycle may be cancelled if the yield of eggs is estimated to be insufficient. If the donor over responds to the fertility medication, the cycle may also need to be cancelled to safeguard the donor's health.

When the sperm of your partner and donated eggs are fertilised, there may be failure of fertilisation in a very small number of cases (1%). This means your trip for embryo transfer will not be required.

## What follow up care is available?

We would normally offer you and your partner a follow-up clinic appointment with the consultant if your treatment has not been successful. We understand that this is a very difficult time for you both emotionally. Should you wish to access any supportive counselling during your fertility treatment you may contact the Leicester Fertility Centre to arrange an appointment with the unit's counsellor.

## If you'd like more information

You may contact the Leicester Fertility Centre where an appointment will be made with the nursing staff to discuss our international egg donation programme in more detail.

## Our commitment to patients

We are constantly striving to improve our services to patients, and we will welcome your comments or suggestions for improvement.

### Leicester Fertility Centre Contact Details

**Tel:** 0116 2585922  
**E-mail:** LFCinfo@uhl-tr.nhs.uk  
**Website:** [www.leicesterfertilitycentre.org.uk](http://www.leicesterfertilitycentre.org.uk)

### Useful addresses

Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority: [www.hfea.gov.uk](http://www.hfea.gov.uk)  
[www.hfea.gov.uk/donation/donor-conceived-people-and-their-parents](http://www.hfea.gov.uk/donation/donor-conceived-people-and-their-parents)  
NICE guidelines: [www.nice.org.uk](http://www.nice.org.uk)  
NHS - Response line: [111.nhs.uk](http://111.nhs.uk) / 111  
NHS - Smoking helpline: 0300 123 1044  
Fertility Network UK: [www.fertilitynetworkuk.org](http://www.fertilitynetworkuk.org) / 0121 323 5025  
Donor Conception Network [www.dcnetwork.org](http://www.dcnetwork.org)



Do you feel that you are at risk of verbal or physical abuse? If so, you may find the following numbers useful:

UAVA Helpline: 0808 80 200 28

Email: [info@uava.org.uk](mailto:info@uava.org.uk)

Text support: 07715 994 962



*This information was correct at the time of printing. While the Trust makes every reasonable effort to keep its information leaflets up to date, very recent changes may not be reflected in the guidance and you should discuss this with the clinical staff at the time of your appointment.*

## Questions

If you have any questions write them down here to remind you what to ask when you speak to your consultant.

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## Today's research is tomorrow's care

We all benefit from research. Leicester's Hospitals is a research active Trust so you may find that research is happening when you visit the hospital or your clinic.

If you are interested in finding out how you can become involved in a clinical trial or to find out more about taking part in research, please speak to your clinician or GP.

**If you need information in a different language or format, please call the number(s) below or email [equality@uhl-tr.nhs.uk](mailto:equality@uhl-tr.nhs.uk)**

اگر آپ کو یہ معلومات کسی اور زبان میں درکار ہیں، تو براہ کرم مندرجہ ذیل نمبر پر ٹیلی فون کریں۔

على هذه المعلومات بلغة أخرى، الرجاء الاتصال على رقم الهاتف الذي يظهر في الأسفل  
જો તમને અન્ય ભાષામાં આ માહિતી જોઈતી હોય, તો નીચે આપેલ નંબર પર ફોન કરી ટેલિફોન કરો

ਜੇ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਇਹ ਜਾਣવાની ਕਿਸੇ ਹੋਰ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਵਿਚ ਚਾਹੁੰਦੇ ਹੋ, ਤਾਂ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਹੇਠਾਂ ਦਿੱਤੇ ਗਏ ਨੰਬਰ 'ਤੇ ਟੈਲੀਫੋਨ ਕਰੋ।

Aby uzyskać informacje w innym języku, proszę zadzwonić pod podany niżej numer telefonu

**0116 258 4382 or 0116 250 2959**