

Donor Egg Handbook

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Donor Eggs and Assisted Reproduction

Pregnancy Using Donor Eggs

Achieving a pregnancy using donor eggs is a form of assisted reproduction, where frozen eggs are imported by Merrion Fertility Clinic from international donor banks. The donor is chosen by you (with our support) and imported eggs stored safely in MFC until you are ready to use them during your treatment.

The use of donor eggs can be broken down into two parts, embryo creation and embryo transfer. Both must be coordinated to ensure the best chance of success.

Embryo creation using Intra Cytoplasmic Sperm Injection (ICSI)

- Donor eggs are frozen by the donor bank and transported to Merrion Fertility Clinic.
- To create embryos, the eggs must first be thawed and fertilised with sperm.
- These eggs must be fertilised by ICSI - this is where a single sperm is selected by an embryologist and injected into the egg.
- It is important to be aware that although survival and fertilisation rates are very good, not all thawed eggs will survive, and not all injected eggs will fertilise.
- Once fertilised, the eggs are now embryos and are allowed to develop for up to 6 days in the laboratory.

Embryo Transfer

- To have the best chance of success it is important that the lining of the uterus is ready before an embryo is transferred.
- Each month there is a time during the menstrual cycle where the lining of the uterus is most receptive to an embryo. Your doctor will prepare a plan for you to ensure both your lining and embryo are ready at the same time.
- The uterine lining is measured by ultrasound scan, and medication can be used to help with aligning your cycle with embryo creation.

Donor Egg Treatment Cycle at Merrion Fertility Clinic

Overview

- During a consultation with your doctor, your full medical history will be taken and the process will be explained in detail.
- The donor selection process and the CFRA (Children's and Family Relationships Act) consent will also be discussed with you.
- A number of tests will need to be arranged before you can complete your choice of donor. These include CMV, blood type, Rhesus, chlamydia and will be arranged by your patient coordinator. Other tests may also be recommended for your individual situation by your Doctor.
- You will be contacted by the patient coordinator with the results
- Your Donor Egg Ordering and Storage Form will then be sent to you via eConsents. This form includes very important information about selecting your donor and the storage of the eggs, it can be signed and returned to MFC via eConsents.
- For some patients, a second appointment with your Doctor will be required, for others, a single appointment will be enough time to discuss the best treatment pathway for you.
- All patients must attend a counselling session to explore the implications of using donor eggs.
- When you have completed the above steps, you can proceed to select your donor and place your order.



Donor Egg Considerations

Legal Considerations

What You Need to Know About CFRA

The use of donor eggs must comply with the Children and Family Relationships Act (CFRA).

The main points are:

- All donors must be identifiable.
- All donors must sign the specific CFRA consent even if they are donating to a donor bank in another country.
- Your details, those of your partner (if applicable), your child and the donor must be submitted to The National Donor Conceived Persons Register.
- These details are specified in the CFRA and include names, dates of birth and contact information.
- When your child reaches the age of 18, they can access this information about their donor. This is important information to be aware of, as it may influence how and when you share information with your child about their genetic background.
- When your baby is born, we ask that you contact us at Merrion Fertility Clinic. We will then send you a document with your details (Certification for Birth Registration) which you will need to register the birth.

For more detailed information on the Children and Family Relationships Act 2015, please visit the [Government of Ireland website](#)

Donor Egg Considerations

Support and Counselling

All patients considering using donor eggs must attend at least one counselling session. This is a specific type of counselling related to the use of donated eggs, called implications counselling.

It is to highlight all the implications of using a donor to help create your family, such as the potential for donor siblings and where to find support if you need it as your child grows up and has questions. Merrion Fertility Clinic provides a counselling service as well as a support group.

For further information please visit:

[Merrion Fertility Clinic Counselling Services](#)

[Merrion Fertility Support Group](#)



Selecting a Donor

There are several factors to be considered when selecting a donor. Many will be personal to you, though there are some that are important from a medical and legal perspective.

In this section, we will discuss the following factors:

- | | |
|----------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1. Donor banks | 4. Suitability for use in Ireland |
| 2. CMV status | 5. Egg donor profiles |
| 3. Blood Type | 6. Genetic Screening |

Donor Egg Considerations

1. Donor Bank

Merrion Fertility Clinic is licensed to import donor eggs from Cryos International. We are not licenced to import eggs from any other donor bank.



2. CMV Status

What is CMV?

Cytomegalovirus (CMV) is a common virus that causes few, if any, symptoms in most people. After an infection, you will carry inactive virus in your body for the rest of your life.

However, if a woman is infected by CMV for the first time during pregnancy, there can be health implications for the baby.

What Does This Mean for Me?

- You will need to be tested to determine if you are CMV positive or negative.
- If you are CMV negative: you must choose a CMV negative donor.
- If you are CMV positive: you may choose either a CMV positive or CMV negative donor.

Donor Egg Considerations

3. Blood Type

Blood Type of Egg Donor

You do not have to limit your choice of donor based on blood type / rhesus, but it is useful information to have. However if you chose a donor based on blood type / rhesus, it may limit the donors available to you.

Blood type of donors is tested according to the following categories:

- ABO blood type (A, B, AB or O)
- Rhesus (rhesus negative or positive)

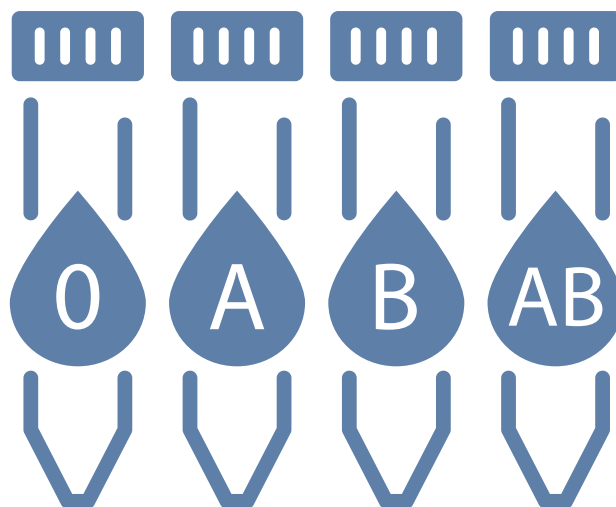
ABO blood type is not usually considered when selecting a donor though Rhesus can be.

If your blood type is Rhesus negative (Rh-):

- You may wish to choose a Rh- donor, although this is typically not required for a first pregnancy.
- Choosing a Rh- donor will lower the risk of your body developing antibodies against rhesus that may affect a future pregnancy.

If your blood type is Rhesus positive (Rh+):

- You may choose either a Rh- or Rh+ donor.



Donor Egg Considerations

4. Donor Egg Use in Ireland

There are two major criteria that determine whether donor eggs are acceptable for use in Ireland:

- I. If they have signed the CFRA consent
- II. Whether family limit has been reached

CFRA consent

When you visit the Cryos website, you must select Ireland as your country of residence and treatment, this is to make sure that only Irish compliant donors will be displayed to you.

Family Limit Reached

- Donor banks used by Merrion Fertility limit the number of families created with a particular donor.
- This is to reduce the number of children born from the same donor within the same country.
- The family limit in Ireland is three for Cryos and four for ESB.
- Once the family limit has been reached, eggs from that donor will only be used to extend existing families.
- To achieve this, you must buy a "quota" with your selected donor. The number of quotas for each donor is limited to three.
- If you are unsuccessful and wish to stop using a donor you can have the fee for the quota refunded to you.



Donor Egg Considerations

5. Egg Donor Profiles

Physical Profile

This includes physical information about the donor:

1. Ethnicity
2. Hair / Eye colour
3. Height / Weight
4. Blood Group
5. CMV status
6. Certain genetic information
7. Family history

Please note: Inheritance of hair and eye colour is not always predictable, so while you may wish for your child to look like you or your partner (where applicable), it is impossible to accurately predict exactly what characteristics will be inherited.

Extended Profile

In addition to basic physical information, this profile type may also include:

- Donor's hobbies
- Educational achievements
- Donor bank staff's impression of her

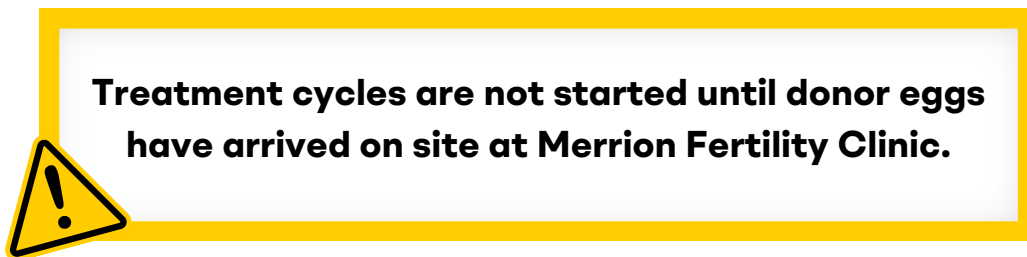
6. Genetic Screening

This is an add on service offered by Cryos, named Gene Matching. If you know you are a carrier for a recessive genetic disease, then you can find out if the donor carries that gene too before you purchase eggs from them. Cryos are required by law to screen for the most common genetic diseases such as cystic fibrosis and thalassemia. You can find this information on each donor in their profile under "Summary of Records". A wider test is also offered, looking at a high number of less frequent recessive genetic diseases. If you are interested in this kind of testing, we recommend you speak to your doctor.

Ordering Donor Eggs

Below, we outline the process for ordering donor eggs for treatment with us. A detailed step by step guide is available "Donor Egg Ordering and Storage Form" and is individualised with your results.

- Create an account with Cryos, taking care to select "Ireland" as your treatment country.
- Set the search filters to ensure you only see donors that match your clinical needs.
- Review the available donors to select the one that best suits you.
- This process can take time, you can contact Cryos directly if you have questions, they will be happy to help. Ensure you let them know you are having treatment with us so they will focus on donors available for use in Ireland.
- We normally recommend ordering six eggs, but your doctor will talk to you about your specific situation.
- Ordering can take place at any time, but eggs are shipped to Merrion Fertility Clinic once a month. You will be notified once your selected donor eggs are safely in storage at the clinic.



What Are the Risks of Using Donated Eggs?

- At Merrion Fertility Clinic we work only with licensed, reputable donor banks.
- Donor banks perform extensive screening of donors before they are approved this includes screening for both inherited and infectious diseases.
- Despite the extensive screening performed by banks, there is no guarantee that a healthy child will be born as a result of treatment with donor eggs as it is not possible to screen for all medical conditions.
- There is a small increased risk of pregnancy complications including high blood pressure, diabetes and blood clotting disorders when the egg used to create the embryo is not your own. The risk is related to your own health and will be discussed with you.

Ordering Donor Eggs

Blocked Donors

- Where a donor-conceived pregnancy or a child is identified as having a significant issue that is potentially hereditary and linked to the donor, this is reported to the donor bank.
- The bank will then contact clinics to inform them the donor is restricted for use until the genetic investigation is completed.
- If a significant genetic issue is confirmed the donor will be blocked permanently. This means eggs that has already been purchased cannot be used and no refund is made of money paid. We will inform you if your donor has been blocked.
- Such blocks may also apply to embryos you have previously created using that donor's eggs. Subsequent use of these embryos will be discussed with you by a doctor.

Self-Reporting

Self-reporting is an important step in the management of donor egg blocks.

- If you become pregnant and any concerns arise with the pregnancy, you must notify Merrion Fertility Clinic so further communication can be relayed to the associated donor bank.
- Similarly, any investigations or diagnosis of the donor-conceived child, at any point in their life, should be communicated to Merrion Fertility Clinic.
- This is for the safety of any potential future treatment using that donor.

What if I Have Questions?

The staff at Merrion Fertility Clinic are here to assist you with any additional questions you may have.

- Reception: (01) 556 7900
- Contact our team through the Patient Portal.

[Patient Portal](#)



**Expert care
with compassion,
honesty & trust**