



## **Oncofertility Program Information Sheet – Female**

**Cancer treatment may affect your fertility and ovarian function. As a result, you may not be able to become pregnant naturally, or you may begin menopause at an early age. Below are options that may be available to you to preserve your fertility potential as well as team members to help you and resources that are available.**

### **The following factors could impact your fertility:**

- Your age
- Your ovarian reserve (which reflects the number of eggs in your ovaries) before treatment
- The type of surgery you have
- The type and dose of chemotherapy you receive
- The area of the body that is irradiated and the dose of radiation you receive
- Other fertility problems you may have

### **The following treatments could impact your fertility:**

1. Surgery removing the ovaries and/or the uterus.
2. Chemotherapy drugs may destroy eggs in the ovary.
3. Radiation therapy to the pelvis destroys eggs in the ovary and may damage the uterus.
4. Removal of your cervix due to cervical cancer

Have you spoken with your oncologist about how likely it is that your treatment plan will cause infertility?

- If so, what risk have they estimated?
- If you're unsure, speak with your doctor to get more information tailored to you and your treatment.

### **Fertility preservation options for women:**

1. Freezing unfertilized eggs (oocytes) or fertilized eggs (embryos)
2. Freezing ovarian tissue: a new technique used only for patients who can not freeze eggs or embryos (usually when treatment cannot be delayed)

### **Alternative options:**

1. Donor egg: using an egg harvested from another woman to form an embryo
2. Surrogacy: Another woman carries a pregnancy using your embryo or an embryo formed from a donor egg

**Other considerations:**

Lupron is an injection that reduces the chance of undergoing permanent menopause by inducing temporary menopause during treatment. This may have a small impact on the ability for breast cancer survivors to become pregnant, but it has not been shown to improve fertility for patients with other cancers. Lupron is generally used in addition to the fertility preservation methods described above, but not in place of those methods. This can be discussed with your oncologist.

**Financial Assistance:**

Financial assistance can be sought through a program for embryo and egg freezing called Fertile Hope. This program offers a discounted rate for their services through Brigham and Women's Hospital and the hormone injections are provided without charge. This is only offered to patients without insurance coverage for fertility preservation who are freezing embryos or eggs before treatment. To find out if you are eligible, and to get an application, visit their website: (<http://www.fertilehope.org/financial-assistance/egg-and-embryo-freezing.cfm>). You must submit the application and obtain approval before you start ovarian stimulation.

**Online Resources Specific to Cancer and Fertility:**

- Oncofertility Consortium Patient Resources
  - MyOncofertility ([www.myoncofertility.org](http://www.myoncofertility.org))
  - Save my fertility ([savemyfertility.org](http://savemyfertility.org))
  - Patient Navigator ([fertilitypreservation.northwestern.edu](http://fertilitypreservation.northwestern.edu))
- Fertile Action ([fertileaction.org](http://fertileaction.org)) [for women with breast cancer]
- American Cancer Society ([www.cancer.org/Treatment/TreatmentsandSideEffects/PhysicalSideEffects/FertilityandCancerWhatAreMyOptions/index](http://www.cancer.org/Treatment/TreatmentsandSideEffects/PhysicalSideEffects/FertilityandCancerWhatAreMyOptions/index))

**Contact information:**

Abby Ciampa, NP Oncofertility at Dana-Farber Cancer Institute, 617-632-4523  
Brigham and Women's Hospital Reproductive Endocrinology, 617-732-4222

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