

fertility SA
POWERED BY
genea
WORLD LEADING
FERTILITY

Egg freezing:
What you need to know





When considering something as important as freezing your eggs, it is crucial to choose a clinic that you can trust.

FertilitySA powered by Genea means you have access to more than 37 years' experience in fertility treatment and IVF. It offers clinically excellent, affordable treatment in an environment that caters for women who are considering their future fertility.

FertilitySA is at the forefront of fertility treatment, innovations and services to maximise the chances of having a baby, now or in the future.

What women tell us...

"I froze my eggs because I had just broken up with my long-term boyfriend, knew my fertility was declining and wanted to do something to feel as though I was investing in my future, giving myself an option for down the track"

– Dianne, 34.

Why freeze your eggs?

It may come as a surprise to learn that the human reproductive system is not all that efficient. At the peak of a woman's fertility in her 20s, a young healthy couple has about a one-in-four chance (25 per cent) of conceiving each month.

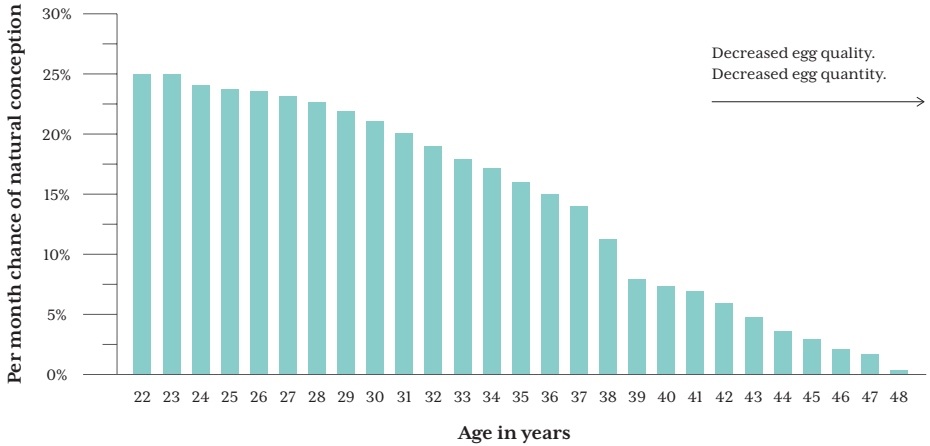
A woman is born with all the eggs she will have in her lifetime, but the quality and quantity of that egg supply begins to deteriorate from the mid-20s, and more rapidly from the age of 35. By 40, the chance of getting pregnant each month falls to about 5 per cent.

With age a key factor in a woman's ability to conceive, it is important for women to consider early if children are part of their future and take steps to preserve their fertility before it's too late.



Many women choose to freeze their eggs because they're aware fertility decreases with age and they want to give themselves options in the future.

Monthly chance of natural conception



While egg freezing doesn't guarantee a woman will go on to have a baby, some women want to take control of their fertility and give themselves the best chance of starting a family in the future.

Women who choose to freeze their eggs do so knowing they are investing in their future fertility. When it comes time to think about starting a family, they know they have given themselves the best chance possible of success by taking steps to safeguard their fertility when they were younger.

When to freeze?

As egg quantity and quality decrease with age, the younger a woman is when she freezes her eggs, the better. Freezing eggs from the period of early 20s to early 30s offers the best chance of going on to have a baby in the future.

A human egg is the largest cell in the body, and is full of delicate structures. After the age of 35, eggs become more fragile and less likely to survive the freeze and thaw process required to create healthy embryos through IVF. This means the chance of success decreases with a woman's age.

While it is understandable that women might be less concerned about starting a family when they are younger, it is crucial to take advantage of those prime reproductive years.

When deciding whether or not to freeze eggs, the two most important factors to consider are the quality and quantity of eggs. As both decrease with age, it is best to begin the process early. This will increase the chance of freezing more high-quality eggs.

We recommend that women consult a Fertility Specialist as soon as they start considering egg freezing to talk through options and time frames based on investigative tests, personal circumstances and their hopes for the future.

The egg freezing process

Egg freezing is relatively straightforward. There are four simple steps.

1 Pre-treatment investigations

- **Serology** – Blood test for Hepatitis B, Hepatitis C, HIV and syphilis.
- **Anti-Mullerian Hormone (AMH)** – AMH is a hormone secreted by cells in the follicles of an ovary and is used to indicate ovarian reserve – or egg quantity.
- **Antral Follicle Count** – Conducted between days 2-5 of the menstrual cycle.
- **Pelvic ultrasound** – Will look at the overall health of the reproductive organs, including the ovaries and fallopian tubes.

A GP can order these tests. Once completed, an appointment can be made with a FertilitySA Fertility Specialist to determine a treatment plan. Call (08) 8100 2900. Counselling will also be offered.

2 Egg stimulation

Each month, eggs grow in fluid-filled sacs (called follicles) on the ovaries, however, only one egg will mature and be released. In an egg freezing cycle, hormone stimulation using medication is carried out over a period of approximately eight to 14 days to encourage a number of eggs to mature at one time. This involves some self-injections. During this period, a woman will be asked to attend a FertilitySA clinic for blood tests and ultrasounds, which can be conducted early in the morning.



3 Egg collection

Once the eggs have matured, an egg collection procedure will take place at a FertilitySA preferred Day Surgery clinic. Local anaesthetic and intravenous pain relief medication is administered before a needle is passed through the vagina into the ovaries to empty the follicles using ultrasound guidance. A general anaesthetic can be administered if preferred for an additional cost. The procedure takes about 10-20 minutes and women are advised to take the day off work to rest afterwards.

4 Vitrification and storage

Collected eggs are then frozen using an advanced method called vitrification – essentially snap freezing – and safely stored.

Ensuring access to leading science is key when considering egg freezing. FertilitySA powered by Genea draws on more than 37 years' experience in fertility treatment to offer women the latest, most innovative technologies in the fertility sector.

The eggs are kept safe and protected in optimal fluid, offering consistency in freezing results. Ensuring eggs are stored in an ideal environment maximises the potential for them to be successfully used in the future.

FertilitySA utilises Genea's world leading fertility technology, including processes, instruments and products, which are used in its clinics throughout Australia.

Success Rates

There have been great advancements in egg freezing over the past decade. By preserving fertility through egg freezing, whilst not guaranteeing a baby, is one way to help increase the chances of success later in life.

A woman's age at the time of egg freezing is an important factor in the success of future IVF cycles using frozen eggs.

Limited data exists on egg freezing success rates overall as fewer than 10 per cent of patients return to use their eggs. Such a small cohort does not provide a statistically significant reflection of pregnancy rates as a result of treatment. However, an important consideration when thinking about egg freezing is FertilitySA's overall IVF success rates.

Should a woman choose to one day use her eggs for IVF treatment, she will be reassured in the knowledge that accessing world leading fertility treatment through FertilitySA powered by Genea means she will be in the best hands.



(08) 8100 2900

fertilitysa.com.au

The information in this brochure does not replace medical advice. Medical and scientific information provided in print and electronically by FertilitySA might or might not be relevant to your own circumstances and should always be discussed with your own doctor before you act on it.

