



## PATIENT & CAREGIVER EDUCATION

# Sperm Banking

This information answers some frequently asked questions about sperm banking and provides a list of local sperm banks.

## What is sperm banking?

Sperm banking is the collection, freezing, and storage of sperm for possible use in the future.

## Why should I do this?

Many cancer treatments damage the cells that grow into sperm. If you can't produce sperm, you will be infertile. This means that you won't be able to have a biological child. Sometimes these cells recover, but sometimes they do not. We can't say for certain how your treatment will affect your future fertility.

You may not be thinking about being a father right now.

However, one day this may be important to you. Sperm banking before treatment will increase your chance of having a biological child in the future using your own sperm. Many young men who don't bank sperm before treatment regret this decision if they're infertile when they want to start a family. Many say they wish they had been pushed more by their families and doctors to do

this. Because of this, we encourage all teens and young men to bank their sperm before treatment that may affect fertility.

## **When should I do this?**

You must bank your sperm before you begin treatment. If your treatment doesn't have to start right away, we suggest you collect 3 specimens. For the first collection, it's best if you don't ejaculate during sex or masturbation for 2 to 5 days before the collection, and 2 to 3 days between each collection. This will help you collect the highest possible number of sperm.

If your treatment will be starting too soon for this timing, you can start collecting right away and schedule the collections with only 1 day between each one. Collecting even just 1 or 2 specimens is helpful because there are new techniques available to fertilize eggs with very few sperm.

If you're having any scans done using radioactive isotopes (such as a bone scan, PET scan, or MUGA scan), you don't need to wait until the isotopes are cleared from your body to bank your sperm. You may bank your sperm any time after your scan. You can also bank sperm if you're having a computed tomography (CT) scan or magnetic resonance imaging (MRI).

## Where can I do this?

Sperm banking is usually done at a licensed laboratory (lab) or fertility center. A number of local sperm banks are listed at the end of this resource. Once you choose a sperm bank, call to make your first appointment. Tell them that you will be starting cancer treatment at Memorial Sloan Kettering (MSK).

If you can't collect a specimen at a sperm bank, some sperm banks will let you collect at home. The sperm bank or your doctor can give you a sterile cup for this.

If you're in the hospital, you will need to collect the specimen in your hospital room. We can arrange for one of the sperm banks in New York to pick up the specimen for a small fee and take it to their lab for processing.

If you're having a family member or friend take the specimen from home or the hospital to the sperm bank, the specimen must be delivered within 60 minutes of collection. It should be put in a pocket close to the body to keep it at body temperature.

## How do I do this?

When you arrive at the sperm bank, you will be brought to a small private room for the collection. After washing and drying your hands, you will stimulate yourself to ejaculate by masturbating. The fluid that comes out of your penis is called semen, and it contains your sperm. You will collect the semen in a sterile cup.

Don't use saliva, spit, or lubricants to masturbate, as these can destroy the sperm. You can ask for mineral oil if this will help you to ejaculate but use this only at the base of your penis to avoid mixing it in with your semen.

Some men aren't able to ejaculate by masturbating because they feel too sick, are in too much pain, feel too embarrassed or uncomfortable, or aren't allowed to masturbate because of religious or cultural beliefs. If you can't collect a specimen by masturbating, please tell your doctor or nurse. There are other methods of collecting sperm, and we can discuss these options with you.

## **What does the sperm bank do with the specimen?**

The sperm bank will analyze your semen, counting the number of sperm. They will divide the specimen into small vials and freeze the sperm for storage. Some sperm die during the freezing and thawing process. However, the sperm that survive aren't damaged while they're frozen.

Sperm can be stored for as long as you want, even for many years. You will have to pay a yearly storage fee as long as the sperm bank holds your specimens. If you're considering throwing away your sperm, talk with your doctor first to ensure you won't need any additional treatment. You may want to store your specimens until you've completed building your family.

## How much will this cost?

Many insurance plans do not cover sperm banking. The cost is different at each sperm bank and can vary based on location. The cost in the New York area ranges from about \$700 to \$1000 for 3 collections, including the first year of storage. After the first year, there will be an annual fee to keep the specimen frozen.

Many sperm banks offer a discounted rate to people with cancer. A few require you to apply for this through the LIVESTRONG Fertility program. Your eligibility is based on your income. To learn more go to [www.livestrong.org/we-can-help/livestrong-fertility](http://www.livestrong.org/we-can-help/livestrong-fertility), and to create an account to apply, log on to <https://livestrongfertilityportal.unicentric.com>.

If the cost of storage after the first year is more than you can afford, you can arrange to transfer the specimens to another sperm bank. Repro Tech provides discounted rates for long-term storage for people with cancer. Visit their website at [www.reprotech.com/financial-assistance.html](http://www.reprotech.com/financial-assistance.html).

## What else should I know?

Ask the sperm bank to contact you or your doctor if they feel you may not have any sperm that can be used to conceive a child in the future. You will also need to ask them to send a copy of the semen analysis to your doctor.

You will be given forms to fill out for the sperm bank. These include a form asking what you would like done with your specimens if you die before you have used them. For example, you can say that you want them thrown away or left to a partner. You can change this information in the future if you change your mind.

The sperm bank may require that you have infectious disease testing done at the time you bank your sperm. They may do the blood and urine tests there, or they may send you to a local lab. You may need to pay an additional cost for this.

## **Where can I learn more?**

For more information, ask your doctor or nurse for a referral to one of our Fertility Nurse Specialists.

## **Finding a Sperm Bank**

Most sperm banks offer a discounted rate for people with cancer. The locations with the star (\*) next to their names require you to apply to LIVESTRONG Fertility to get a discounted rate. To learn more go to [www.livestrong.org/we-can-help/livestrong-fertility](http://www.livestrong.org/we-can-help/livestrong-fertility), and to create an account to apply, log on to <https://livestrongfertilityportal.unicentric.com>.

## **Manhattan**

### **\*MAZE Laboratories**

633 Third Avenue, Suite 9B (between 40<sup>th</sup> and 41<sup>st</sup> Streets)

New York, NY 10065

914-683-0000

## **Repro Labs**

332 East 30<sup>th</sup> Street (between First and Second Avenues)

New York, NY 10016

212-779-3988

## **Long Island**

### **Reproductive Specialists of New York**

200 Old Country Road, Suite 350

Mineola, NY 11501

516-739-2100, extension 110

Or

2500 Nesconset Highway, Building 23

Stony Brook, NY 11790

631-246-9100

## **Westchester and Upstate NY**

### **\*MAZE Laboratories**

2975 Westchester Avenue

Purchase, NY 10577

914-683-0000

## **CNY Fertility**

195 Intrepid Lane  
Syracuse, NY 13205  
315-469-8700

Or

38A Old Sparrowbush Road  
Latham, NY 12110 (near Albany)  
315-469-8700

## **New Jersey**

### **Reproductive Medicine Associates of New Jersey**

140 Allen Road  
Basking Ridge, NJ 07920  
973-656-2823

You may be able to sperm bank at the Eatontown or Marlton location.

### **The Sperm and Embryo Bank of New Jersey**

187 Mill Lane  
Mountainside, NJ 07920  
908-654-8836

## **Pennsylvania**

### **\*Fairfax Cryobank**

3401 Market Street, Suite 205



Philadelphia, PA 19104

215-386-1977

## **Connecticut**

### **Reproductive Medicine Associates of Connecticut**

761 Main Avenue, Suite 200

Norwalk, CT 06851

203-750-7400

If you have any questions, contact a member of your healthcare team directly. If you're a patient at MSK and you need to reach a provider after 5:00 PM, during the weekend, or on a holiday, call 212-639-2000.

For more resources, visit [www.mskcc.org/pe](http://www.mskcc.org/pe) to search our virtual library.

---

Sperm Banking - Last updated on December 13, 2018

All rights owned and reserved by Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center