

Specialists In Reproductive Medicine & Surgery, P.A.

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Excellence, Experience & Ethics



Patient Information and Consent To Donate Embryos Assisted Reproductive Technologies

What can I do with my cryopreserved embryos?

Your cryopreserved embryos can undergo the following:

Example	Explanation
1. Thaw with degeneration	The embryos are thawed and disposed of in a respectful manner. Some practices, such as ours, no longer provides this as an option when so many other excellent options listed below exist.
2. Thaw for scientific study	These embryos are often used for such activities as: ➤ Training laboratory personnel ➤ Used to test laboratory quality assurance
3. Donated for science	These embryos are donated to science. They may not be thawed and used right away. An example of this option is stem cell research. Unfortunately, this is not always possible.
4. Embryo Donation	Embryos are donated by the Donating Parents to Embryo Donation Recipients .

What is Embryo Donation?

A caring and compassionate couple, the **Donating Parents**, decide to donate their frozen embryos. Rather than destroy the embryos or donate the to science, the **Donating Parents** often feel that their cryopreserved embryos deserve a chance at life and a needy couple a chance at parenthood.

Who are the potential Donor Embryo Recipients?

The following are some of the potential patients who are **Donor Embryo Recipients**:

- Both partners have significant fertility issues.
- Couples who are seeking a less expensive alternative compared to other technologies and adoption.
- Couples who are unable to adopt (i.e., cancer survivor or couples in their 40's).
- Couples with a family history of genetic disease where direct reproduction is not recommended.

Significant medical conditions such as diabetes and recurrent pregnancy loss may exclude a **Donor Embryo Recipient** from participation in the program.

Can we stipulate who will get our embryos?

At times, the **Donating Parents** may decide to make stipulations regarding the **Donor Embryo Recipients**. Understand, however, the more stipulations that are made, the less likely it is that the embryos will find a qualified recipient couple and be transferred. Stipulations such as race and religion are occasionally requested. Please see the separate **Embryo Donation Stipulation Agreement**.

If we ask for our embryos to be donated, will they automatically be placed in the Embryo Donation Program?

The short answer is, *no*. While not an easy decision, SRMS reserves the right to refuse to take some embryos into the **Embryo Donation Program**. Here are some of the reasons SRMS may refuse to take the embryos:

1. If the embryos came from the eggs of a 40-year-old woman, the likelihood that the embryos will be chosen is reduced.
2. If a single embryo is offered, it is unlikely that it is chosen.
3. If there is a family history of genetic disease, they may not be chosen.
4. Embryos of poor quality will not be accepted.
5. If the facility that froze the embryos originally have poor success rates for their frozen embryo transfer procedures, the donated embryos may not thaw well and survive.

If SRMS refuses to take the embryos, the couple is free to find another location to take the embryos, although few facilities are willing to take embryos for Embryo Donation.

Will we have to pay anything to donate our embryos?

All transport and processing fees for the donated embryos to be packaged and sent to SRMS will be paid for by SRMS. You will not incur any expense through the Embryo Donation process.

Are we paid for our embryos?

You agree to donate your embryos by your own free will and you will **not** be compensated by SRMS for your kindness. While SRMS does want to encourage couples to donate their embryos, we do not want to entice them in an unethical fashion.

Can we get our embryos back?

You will have the option to request that your Donated Embryos be returned. Please do not do this without significant cause since an **Embryo Recipient Couple** may be counting on your embryos and be very close to the actual transfer process. These last minute cancellations can be extraordinarily disappointing to the **Recipient Couple**. The **Donating Parents** will pay the fees involved in processing and transport of these embryos to the location of your choice.

If the donated embryos have not been used within five years of arriving to SRMS, the final disposition of the embryos will have to be decided upon. Rather than being sent back after five years, you will also have the option to thaw them, donate them to science or have them transferred to the location of your choice. If you so choose, the **Donating Parents** will pay the fees involved in processing and transport

of these embryos to the location of your choice. If mutually decided upon, SRMS may choose to keep them in the Embryo Donation Program, but it is clearly understood that SRMS cannot routinely be responsible for holding Donated Embryos indefinitely that are not chosen within five years by qualified Embryo Recipients.

Will we have to undergo any future testing?

When your embryos are chosen, SRMS will review the data on your family history you submitted in the original materials. Standards-of-care genetic screening issues may need to be further addressed. If you agreed to potential future blood testing in the original consents, you will be contacted and asked to undergo additional laboratory testing (i.e., hepatitis, HIV and genetic studies) at no charge. Any significant information found from the screening tests will be communicated directly to you. We promise to make this step as convenient as possible.

What are the success rates for Embryo Donation?

As data accumulates, these success rates will be published on the www.DreamABaby.com web site. Please visit the www.DreamABaby.com web site and click follow the links to the statistics section.

Do we have any legal responsibilities to the Donor Embryo offspring?

Currently, you will not have any Parental responsibilities to the offspring from embryo donation here in the state of Florida.

Can the Donor Embryo offspring ever find us?

The Embryo Donation program is anonymous. In addition, SRMS is required to keep medical charts for only seven years, so requests made years in the future may not be able to be honored. SRMS intends to honor the contracts that specified anonymity. Appropriate legal means would be drawn upon to protect all parties.

If offspring from Donated Embryos needs to contact you for medical reasons (i.e., bone marrow or kidney transplant because of significant disease) and upon request by the Recipient Couple, SRMS would act as a neutral entity to assist all parties in appropriate communication while keeping confidentiality intact.

How long can the Donated Embryos stay frozen?

We really do not know the limit of the cryopreservation process. Animal research has shown that offspring are possible after many years of cryopreservation. More research will need to be done before this question can be adequately answered.

SRMS commits to placing the Embryo Donation data for at least five years from the day of arrival to the facility. At the end of five years, you will be contacted and the embryos will then either undergo thaw and disposal, thaw for scientific study or will be shipped to the location of your choosing.

If you do not return the five-year notification consent, SRMS will assume full control of the embryos. They will be left on the Embryo Donation list & eventually donated, thawed and disposed of, thawed for scientific study or donated to science. SRMS simply cannot continue to indefinitely freeze large numbers of abandoned embryos.

Could the children from Embryo Donation inadvertently meet their siblings and reproduce (Inadvertent Consanguinity)?

It is quite common to be concerned about the potential for related siblings raised in different families meeting and reproducing.

Similar concerns have existed and have been examined in detail for egg and/or sperm donation cycles. According to existing guidelines, it is recommended that we limit a single egg/sperm donor from producing no more than 15 offspring per 500,000 population. Please recall that we here at SRMS cater to a large population in Southwest Florida, conservatively estimated at over 1,000,000, not even including the other states and countries we service. According to the guidelines, we could easily have over 30 offspring residing in Southwest Florida per egg/sperm donor before retiring any given donor.

Given the fact that some of the embryos placed up for Embryo Donation are coming from out of the area, it becomes even more unlikely that the siblings could ever meet. It becomes astronomically unlikely.

We here at SRMS will try to limit an embryo donation couple to no more than six successful donated offspring within the Southwest Florida Region.

What are the psychological affects of the Embryo Donation process?

Embryo donation is clearly new, bringing with it the potential for complex psychological, social, emotional, and ethical considerations. We have neither significant long-term experience nor psychosocial research to draw upon. While possible, it seems unlikely that there will be any significant psychological impacts to all parties involved, but this is uncertain. It goes to reason, however, that many couples will prefer the embryos be transferred rather than destroyed.

Will we be contacted if the Recipient Couple conceives?

With the permission of the Donor Embryo Recipients and your own personal desire to be contacted, we will contact you regarding the success of the Embryo Donation process. It is important that if you move that you please contact the facility as to your change in address.

Will the Embryo Recipient receive all of our donated embryos?

Once pregnancy occurs in the Embryo Recipient, they may reserve *some* of the remaining cryopreserved donated embryos for further use. If a large number of embryos remain, however, SRMS reserves the right to portion out the remaining embryos so that the largest number of families will benefit from the Embryo Donation process. Since there is often a very long waiting list for Embryo Donation, we simply do not want one couple hoarding a large number of unused embryos while another needy couple could be enjoying parenthood.

In addition, we will not allow any **Donor Embryo Recipient** to “re-donate” the donated embryos with ***new stipulations***. It is important that any restrictions that you placed on the original set of donated embryos will remain intact and not be modified during a theoretical second embryo donation process.

Why donate them to SRMS?

While there may be other programs which may accept your donated embryos; here are a few reasons why you might want to consider sending your Donated Embryos to SRMS:

- There are very few Embryo Donation programs currently available.
- SRMS does not charge a “middle-man” fee, thereby decreasing the costs to the desperate Recipient Couple.
- SRMS has a history of being an “Embryo Advocate” by discussing the fate of abandoned embryos and trying to change current standards regarding the automatic disposal of the abandoned embryo.
- SRMS will allow you to have your embryos returned upon request, assuming that they have not been used.
- SRMS agrees to help all parties keep track of newly diagnosed genetic problems in the Embryo Donor family or the Embryo Recipient offspring.
- SRMS has an excellent success rate in a large number of ART procedures.
- SRMS has an extraordinarily organized Embryo Donation Program, which will help to make certain that all steps of the Embryo Donation process run smoothly.
- The SRMS Embryo Donation Program is easily accessible through the web site at no charge to the recipients. This increases the likelihood that the embryos will be chosen by qualifying recipients and find a wonderful home.
- Florida has excellent legal statutes that protect many sets of circumstances, which make it a safe haven in which to donate and receive embryos.

If you have any questions regarding the Embryo Donation Program, we suggest you contact us and we will try to answer your questions.

Why can't the needy couple simply adopt?

Adoption is an excellent option for many couples. For some, however, Embryo Donation may be an even better alternative:

1. Embryo Donation is quicker with delivery often within one year of the first visit.
2. Embryo Donation is usually significantly less expensive than adoption.
3. Embryo Donation is usually less complicated and less expensive than many alternative ART procedures.
4. If there are enough Donated Embryos available, more than one child (i.e., brothers and sisters) may be delivered by the Recipient Couple all with similar genetic inheritance.
5. Unlike adoption, one has a tremendous amount of medical information regarding the mother and the true father of the Donated Embryos. At times in conventional adoption, the genetic Father of the gestation is incorrectly identified leading to uncertainty and future custody issues.
6. Unlike adoption, the Recipient Couple can choose the genetic traits they value to some degree by looking for Donated Embryos from specific genetic, social and religious backgrounds.

Patient Information and Consent To Donate Embryos (cont.)

7. Unlike adoption, the Donor Embryo Recipient can protect and nurture the pregnancy minimizing prenatal exposure to drugs, poor nutrition and **Sexually Transmitted Infections (STI's)**.
8. Unlike adoption, the Donor Embryo Recipient may go to the Obstetrician of her own choice. In conventional adoption, the pregnant mother goes to physician of her choice.
9. Embryo Donation offers a greater level of privacy compared to conventional adoption.
10. While quite variable, some insurance plans will cover for some aspects of the **Frozen Donor Embryo Transfer (FDET)** process while they will not cover adoption fees.

Adoption is still an excellent option for some couples while Embryo Donation has a number of interesting advantages.

How do we get started?

1. If you have not received the entire Embryo Donation packet, we ask that you call and request this information.
2. Visit <http://www.dreamababy.com/embryo-donation.htm> for additional information and to review the embryos currently available for donation.
3. If you have questions, an appointment will be made or a telephone conference will be set up with the Embryo Donation Coordinator.
4. If you desire answers to any legal questions, an attorney's name will be provided to you. (<http://www.LegalSurrogacy.com/>)
5. You will be asked to review and complete the Embryo Donation Packet. All consents will have to be signed and sent to us.
6. After the consents are signed, SRMS will contact the laboratory where the embryos are stored and obtain information on the number and quality of the embryos stored.
7. SRMS will then grade the embryos and decide if the embryos will be accepted into the Embryo Donation Program.
8. SRMS will then pay all handling and shipping fees to the SRMS laboratory.
9. The information on the Donated Embryos will be placed on the SRMS web site.

(Continued on next page)

Will we be told of the success/failure of the embryo donation procedures?

Understanding that once the embryos are donated, it is up to the Embryo Recipients to agree for SRMS to notify us, in an anonymous fashion, of the success or failure of the Donor Embryo Transfer procedures:

- We ***agree*** to have SRMS notify us of the success/failure of the Donor Embryo procedures.
- We prefer that SRMS ***not*** notify us of the success failure of the Donor Embryo Transfer procedures.

Summary:

The Embryo Donation Program is a wonderful option for your embryos. If you feel these embryos deserve a chance at life and that an infertile couple has a chance at parenthood, then Embryo Donation is a wonderful alternative.

Our questions have been answered to our satisfaction. All of the blanks in this consent have been filled prior to the signing of the signatures below:

_____	_____	____/____/____
Woman's Signature	Woman's Name (print)	Date
_____	_____	____/____/____
Partner's Signature	Partner's Name (print)	Date
_____	_____	____/____/____
SRMS Nurse Coordinator Signature	SRMS Nurse's Name (print)	Date
_____	_____	____/____/____
SRMS Physician's Signature	SRMS Physician's Name (print)	Date

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Initials:	Date:
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