

Fertility Associates of Memphis Announces Mid-South's First Live Births from Frozen Egg Cycles

Advances in Fertility Preservation with Egg Freezing Benefit Infertile Community & Cancer Patients

The ability to successfully freeze, thaw, and fertilize a woman's oocytes (eggs) has led to the first generation of babies born as a result of this advanced reproductive technology. Fertility Associates of Memphis reported the region's first live births from frozen egg in-vitro fertilization (IVF) cycles, with expectations for ongoing success with this breakthrough in fertility preservation.

[Dr. William Kutteh](#), [Dr. Raymond Ke](#), and [Dr. Paul Brezina](#), board certified reproductive endocrinologists, offer egg freezing as part of comprehensive fertility treatment at the Fertility Associates of Memphis. The physicians advocate for raising awareness among women of reproductive age, as well as oncologists and other healthcare professionals so that men and women—and even adolescents—newly diagnosed with cancer can take proactive steps to preserve fertility.

“When declining fertility, or a life crisis such as cancer or other chronic disease, threatens a person's ability to start a family, it is reassuring to know treatment options exist that can preserve and protect fertility,” says Dr. Kutteh, who recently addressed oncologists at St. Jude Children's Research Hospital with a message of hope for preserving fertility in young adults diagnosed with cancer.

“The life-saving benefits of chemotherapy, surgery, or radiation can devastate the reproductive system,” says Dr. Kutteh. “Young adults shouldn't have to think about becoming a parent at such a young age, but without fertility preservation, cancer can destroy the potential to realize that dream.”

Cryopreservation Family-Building Options Now Include Eggs, Sperm and Embryos

For decades, the options for preserving fertility were limited to reproductive tissue, sperm, and embryos (fertilized eggs). The religious and ethical implications of creating and freezing embryos deterred many people from pursuing fertility preservation.

Today, preserving eggs for future [IVF](#) cycles is made possible through a rapid freezing process called vitrification. Previously, ice crystals would form within the eggs during the freezing process, often destroying the egg's viability.

A woman can elect to have her eggs retrieved during an abbreviated cycle of IVF, initiating with ovulation induction and concluding with egg retrieval. After eggs are cryopreserved, embryologists assist in the thawing process and combine egg with sperm, often employing intracytoplasmic sperm injection (ICSI), in a scheduled IVF cycle. Resulting embryos are then transferred to the uterus for a potential pregnancy.

Who is a candidate for fertility preservation?

The primary applications for frozen egg storage include medical necessity, and elective fertility preservation. Women of reproductive age that would like to have a family, but are not ready, may consider egg freezing as an alternative to childfree living. Maternal age is a leading cause of female infertility, with egg quality and egg

quantity rapidly declining after a woman's 35th birthday.

In cases of medical necessity, a fertility specialist coordinates expedited care in advance of, or in conjunction with, cancer treatment schedules.

The future of fertility preservation

In 2012, the American Society for Reproductive Medicine lifted the [experimental classification](#) from egg freezing as a fertility treatment. To date, approximately 1,000 babies have been born as a result of egg freezing.

About The Fertility Associates of Memphis

Fertility Associates of Memphis is a state-of-the-art practice providing comprehensive reproductive health care to couples of the Mid-South and beyond . . . treating patients struggling with infertility, recurrent pregnancy loss, and reproductive disorders. Our highly specialized team utilizes cutting edge techniques including in vitro fertilization with laser blastocyst biopsy, preimplantation genetic diagnosis, and fertility preservation. Our compassionate physicians, board-certified in reproductive endocrinology and infertility, have been bringing dreams to life for more than 20 years.

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