

Oocyte Donation Program

Thank you for your interest in becoming an Oocyte (egg) donor at Duke University Medical Center. The goal of our program is to provide eggs anonymously to women with impending or complete ovarian failure. Ovarian failure is one of the leading causes of infertility and may occur for many reasons. Delayed child-bearing, radiation or chemotherapy therapy for cancer, autoimmune diseases and surgical removal of the ovaries are a few of the causes of ovarian failure.

Donating eggs is not an easy process and will require a commitment of time and energy. Couples with whom you may be matched will be investing \$14,600.00 for each cycle, therefore it is important that you are willing to complete the process once begun. Please let us know if at any time you decide that you are unwilling to participate in this program.

We will utilize the information you have provided in this form to determine if you are an appropriate candidate to complete the screening to participate in our program. If appropriate, we will contact you by phone and arrange a day for you to complete the screening process. During a cycle, you will be required to give yourself several injectable medications - we will teach you how to do this. You may choose to have a friend or partner administer these medications. All are very important to the success of the cycle and it is very important that they be given as directed.

Prior to your initial clinic appointment, we will mail you a multiple-choice questionnaire called the Personality Assessment Inventory to complete at home. It takes about 45- 60 minutes to finish. Complete the questionnaire at home in a quiet place and then bring it with you to the clinic. During your initial clinic appointment, you will meet with Julia Woodward, Ph.D., a clinical psychologist. She will ask you a variety of questions in order to understand more about you, what your life is like, and why you want to be a donor. You will also be given the egg donation consent form in this visit so that you have a complete understanding of the process and an opportunity to have all of your questions answered. Finally, we require blood tests to screen for blood type, HIV, hepatitis B and C and RPR (syphilis) of all persons who donate their eggs. This clinic appointment requires 2 - 3 hours. Once a tentative match has been made, we will contact you by phone and ask if you are still willing to be a donor and if there are any dates that you would not be available.

At the end of this process, you may discover that you have not been accepted as an egg donor. This does not mean there is anything wrong with you. We are concerned about many issues, including the possibility that you may regret your participation. Once all of the screening is completed, we will attempt to match you with a recipient couple and schedule the start of medications.

Lupron

Once you have been accepted as a donor, we will determine where you are in your menstrual cycle. We will utilize a medication called Lupron to help coordinate the menstrual cycles of you and your recipient. We will usually begin Lupron the week before your next expected period. If you are taking oral contraceptives, we will overlap the Lupron and the pills for a few days, then have you stop the pills. Before beginning Lupron you will be required to come to the clinic in the morning for an ultrasound of your ovaries and a blood pregnancy test. Once the pregnancy test has been confirmed as negative you will give yourself (or have a friend give to you) an injection of Lupron. We use a form of Lupron that will last for 30 days. Lupron will suppress your reproductive hormones and allow us to have control of the timing of your cycle. Usually within a week of starting Lupron you will have a menstrual period. It may be a few days late, and may be heavier than normal. When this period occurs, please call our office and we will give you instructions about when to begin the next medication. Side effects of Lupron include hot flashes, vaginal dryness, and headaches. These will diminish when you start the gonadatropins, the second set of medications used in this process. If you have not had an egg retrieval within 30 days of the Lupron shot, we will instruct you to begin daily injections of a small amount of Lupron. These are similar to insulin injections, and are usually not uncomfortable or difficult to give.

Gonadatropins

Gonadatropins are medications that will stimulate your ovaries to produce multiple mature eggs in a cycle. It is given via a subcutaneous (just under the skin) injection every evening for anywhere from 9-18 days (the average time is 12 days). There are several brand names of gonadatropins available and we will supply you with the medications, syringes and needles and will provide instructions for injecting your brand. We will instruct you how much medicine to take. After taking 5 or 6 injections of gonadatropin you will come in for your first monitoring visit. All of our monitoring visits take place in the morning beginning at 7:30AM. At each visit you will have a vaginal ultrasound to monitor the progress of your ovarian response to the medicine and you may have blood drawn for an estrogen level (also to monitor your response to the medicine). At each visit we will discuss with you your progress and arrange your next visit. We will usually need to see you every 2-3 days for 3 or 4 visits. If you need to leave early, please plan to arrive early (even as early as 7:30am), as we see patients in the order of arrival. Our patient load can be variable and sometimes waiting cannot be avoided. We recommend that you bring reading material or other distractions. Once the follicles (cysts containing eggs) on your ovaries have reached the desired size you will be instructed to administer the third type of medication—Ovidrel.

Ovidrel (human chorionic gonadatropin)

We will instruct you to take Ovidrel in the evening, 2 days before egg retrieval. This medication is also given subcutaneously, like your gonadatropin. It is very important that you take this injection at the exact time instructed as we will plan the egg retrieval for 37 hours later. Ovidrel will cause the eggs to become mature and be released. It is important that we perform the retrieval before the eggs are released. After the Ovidrel, you will not take any more injections.

Egg Retrieval

On the morning of the planned egg retrieval you will be instructed to arrive at our clinic at 9:00am (7:00am if on a weekend). You will **not** be able to drive yourself home on this day. Please make arrangements for transportation to and from the hospital. When you arrive at the clinic, the nurses will instruct you to change into a gown and they will insert an IV catheter in your arm. Through this IV, we will administer medications that will make you very sleepy during the egg retrieval. We use a method called conscious sedation and most patients have only mild discomfort, if any. The egg retrieval is performed using an endovaginal probe and needle with ultrasound guidance. A typical egg retrieval takes 10-15 minutes. If you have discomfort, we will administer more medication through the IV. After the retrieval, you will return to the recovery area to rest for 1-2 hours. Once you feel awake, have something to drink, and empty your bladder, the IV will be removed and your ride can take you home. You cannot plan any other activities on the day of retrieval.

We will not be able to remove all of the eggs during the retrieval which means **you could easily become pregnant** this cycle. We strongly suggest that you use a barrier form of contraception (Foam, diaphragm, condoms) or abstain from intercourse until after you have a period. After retrieval you will probably start a period within 10-14 days. At this time you may return to your normal form of contraception.

There are several complications that may occur while participating in a cycle of egg donation. First, you could have a possible increased risk of ovarian cancer from use of infertility medications. However, newer studies suggest that the risk of ovarian cancer is not increased by the use of gonadatropins. Use of birth control pills and pregnancy can both decrease your risk. Second, most people taking these fertility medications will feel bloated, have some abdominal tenderness, and a temporary 5-10 pound weight gain. In a very small proportion of cases (1%), donors may develop severe ovarian hyperstimulation syndrome (OHSS) and may require IV fluids, pain medication, hospitalization and monitoring to prevent severe medical complications. If you have regular periods, you are not at high risk for developing severe ovarian hyperstimulation syndrome. We would be happy to answer any questions about these possible complications that you may have.

We will ask you to sign consent forms prior to each cycle that will detail the risks and responsibilities involved with oocyte donation, conscious sedation, and egg retrieval.

We hope this brochure has answered any questions you may have regarding becoming an egg donor. Please feel free to call our office if you have further questions. If after reading this information you are still interested in becoming an egg donor, please contact us at 919-572-4673, choose option #1.