

Clinical Guidelines
**REFERRING ONCOLOGY PATIENTS FOR
PRE-TREATMENT GAMETE OR EMBRYO STORAGE**

Introduction

Some treatments involving chemotherapy or radiotherapy can affect a patient's future ability to have children. RCP/RCR/RCOG joint guidelines¹ recommend that the possible future effects of chemotherapy or radiotherapy on fertility should be discussed with all patients who have reproductive potential. Where relevant, patients who are about to undergo chemotherapy or radiotherapy may wish to consider storing samples of their sperm, eggs or embryos before their treatment commences.

The storage of gametes and embryos is an activity licensed by the Human Fertilisation & Embryology Authority (HFEA) under the terms of the HF&E Act of Parliament (1990) as amended (2008).

This document describes the steps to be undertaken when referring patients for gamete or embryo storage prior to oncology treatment.

Viral Screening

Take bloods and send to virology for HIV, hepatitis B (antibody and core antigen) & hepatitis C screening. **NB** We cannot store samples until screening bloods have been taken (patients can be referred pending screening results).

If a patient is known to be HIV or hepatitis B or C positive, CARE Fertility Bath does not have facilities to store such samples and the man will have to be referred to another clinic – please contact us for details.

Referral

Ensure patients meet the criteria for referral (see next page). Complete ALL sections of the relevant referral form. It is important that the form is signed by a registered medical practitioner as this allows CARE Fertility Bath to store samples for up to 55 years, otherwise the maximum storage period is limited to 10 years.

Email the completed referral form to CARE Fertility Bath from an nhs.net email address to ruh-tr.enquiries-bfc@nhs.net. Please ensure the patient contact details are correct. Upon receipt of the referral CARE Fertility Bath will contact the patient to arrange an appointment.

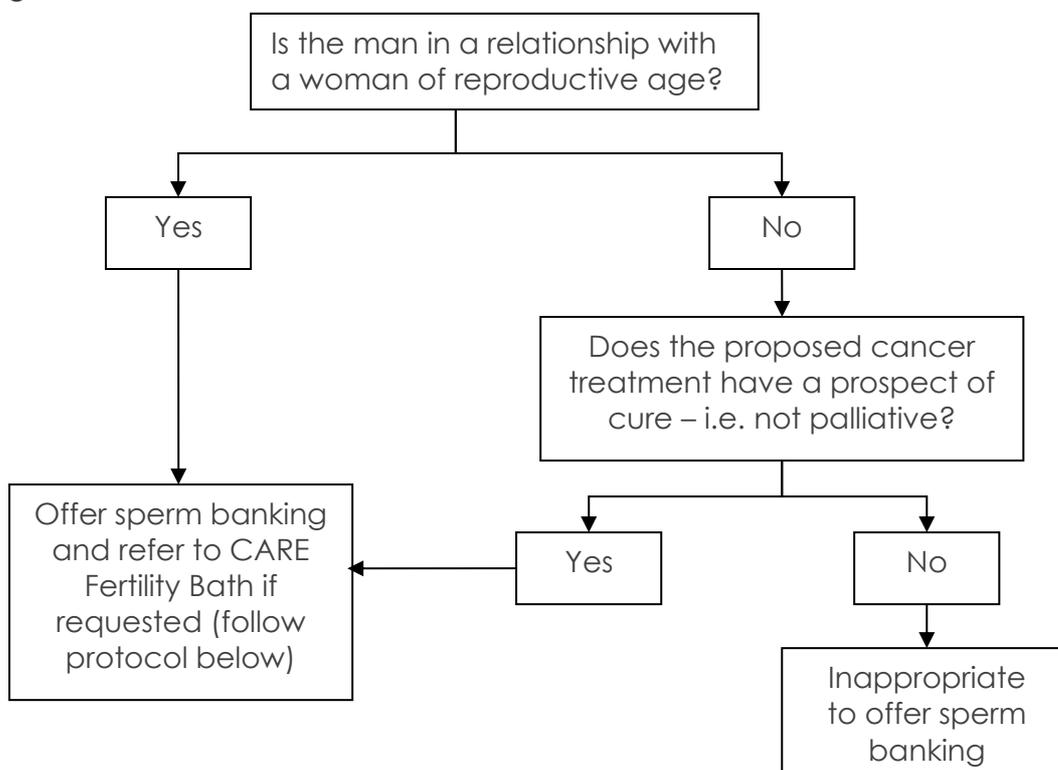
Is freezing and storage funded by the NHS?

NHS funding for gamete or embryo cryopreservation is not always granted and must be agreed by the CCG. Patients who already have a child or children may not be eligible for funding - CARE Fertility Bath can check this with the relevant CCG. When referring patients please ensure the GP details for the patient being referred is detailed correctly on the referral form, so that we can contact the CCG immediately. If a patient is eligible for NHS funding the cost of freezing and a pre-agreed length of storage time will be covered. After this period of time, if a patient wishes to keep the samples in storage, the patient will have to pay an annual storage fee. CARE Fertility Bath can inform the patient how many years of storage will be funded by the NHS.

¹Royal College of Physicians/Royal College of Radiologists/Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists joint report: The effects of cancer treatment on reproductive functions: Guidance on management.

MALE PATIENTS

All post pubertal males who may develop gonadal dysfunction should, whenever relevant, be offered sperm banking. Please see diagram below to assess whether offering sperm storage is relevant.



FEMALE PATIENTS

Do not refer patients unless they meet referral criteria listed below.

The cost of treatment and storage can be up to £6000, which will have to be met by the patient unless CCG funding has been agreed.

Criteria for referral

- Proposed cancer treatment has a prospect of cure – i.e. not palliative
- Proposed treatment has significant risk of causing sterility
- Must be under 40 years of age
- Sufficient time exists for cycle of ovarian stimulation without detriment to treatment of malignant condition. Absolute minimum time required is two weeks.
- No previous indication of ovarian failure, or previous cancer treatment which may have caused ovarian failure.