

# Fertility and Transplant For Men

**Blood and marrow transplant (BMT) can affect your fertility (your ability to have children). Talk with your doctors now if you may want to have children in the future. There are ways to help you keep (preserve) your fertility. Even if you've already had a BMT, there may be ways your doctors can help.**

**This information is for teens and adults. Right now, there's no standard way to preserve fertility in children.**

## This fact sheet tells you:

- How BMT can sometimes cause infertility (inability to have a child)
- The sperm banking process
- Questions to ask your doctor and insurance company
- Where to get more information about fertility preservation

## Transplant and fertility risks

- The transplant process starts with high doses of chemotherapy and sometimes radiation. This is given to prepare your body to receive the blood-forming cells.
- High doses of chemotherapy and radiation can make you infertile.
- Sperm are the male reproductive cells. They can be damaged by radiation and chemotherapy.
- Chemo and radiation can also lower the number of sperm a man can make.

## Sperm banking

Banking, or saving, your sperm is a standard fertility preservation option for men. First, talk to your health insurance company to see if they will pay for sperm collection and storage. Then, contact a sperm bank. There are sperm banks located throughout the country. Some sperm banks work through the mail.

Options to collect your sperm include:

1. **At home:** A sperm bank will send you a kit with instructions. You'll masturbate at home into a container and then mail it back to the sperm bank.
2. **At sperm bank:** You will be in a private room at the sperm bank. You'll masturbate into a container.

The lab at the sperm bank will freeze and store your sample. They can store it for 30 years or more.

## New and unproven option

**Testicular tissue freezing:** You have surgery to remove, freeze and store tissue from your testicles. Doctors are still learning about this fertility preservation option. It may be expensive and it may not work.

## Questions to ask your doctor

It is important to ask questions so you know all of your options. Sometimes people feel uncomfortable talking about fertility, but doctors and nurses are used to answering these questions.

Ask your doctor:

- With my treatment, what are my chances of being able to have children in the future?
- Should I see a fertility doctor? Can you refer me to one?
- Can you refer me to a sperm bank near my home?



## Questions to ask your insurance company

Sperm banking can be expensive. Your insurance policy may pay for all, some or none of the process.

Ask if your insurance policy pays for:

- Collection of sperm
- Storage of sperm

If your insurance doesn't pay for all of the process, there are other resources that may be able to help with the costs. Some states have laws that require insurance companies to pay for sperm banking for certain patients.

## Keep in mind

- You may still be fertile for a couple of months after transplant. So it's important to always use a form of birth control that's best for you when you're recovering.
- As your immune system recovers from transplant, it's important to avoid sexually transmitted infections:
  - Ask your doctor about your risk.
  - Use condoms to prevent infection.

## Resources for you

Talk to someone who can help:

- Contact a BMT Patient Navigator:
  - Call: 1 (888) 999-6743
  - Email: [patientinfo@nmdp.org](mailto:patientinfo@nmdp.org)
- Contact a BMT Patient Navigator:
  - Call: 1 (888) 999-6743

Access an online tool at [nmdp.org/fertility](https://nmdp.org/fertility) to learn more about:

- Collecting and storing sperm
- New and unproven options for fertility preservation
- Family planning options
- Health insurance and financial aid
- Legal and ethical considerations

Other online resources include:

- [Cancer.net](https://www.cancer.net) (search "fertility preservation")
- [Livestrong.org/fertility](https://www.livestrong.org/fertility)
- [Mayoclinic.org](https://www.mayoclinic.org) (search "fertility preservation")
- [Oncofertility.northwestern.edu](https://oncofertility.northwestern.edu)
- [Resolve.org](https://www.resolve.org)
- [Savemyfertility.org](https://www.savemyfertility.org)



## At every step, we're here to help

NMDP<sup>SM</sup> has a team dedicated to providing information and support to you before, during, and after transplant. You can contact our Patient Support Center to ask questions you may have about transplant, request professional or peer support, or receive free patient education materials.

Call: 1 (888) 999-6743 | Email: [patientinfo@nmdp.org](mailto:patientinfo@nmdp.org) | Web: [nmdp.org/one-on-one](https://nmdp.org/one-on-one)



Every individual's medical situation, transplant experience, and recovery is unique. You should always consult with your own transplant team or family doctor regarding your situation. This information is not intended to replace, and should not replace, a doctor's medical judgment or advice.