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## Oncology Directorate and Haematology SDU

# Cancer and Fertility: A Guide for Men

You have recently been told that you are going to need treatment for your cancer. This treatment, chemotherapy, radiotherapy or surgery, may damage your future ability to father a child naturally. You will have been given some information to read about cancer and infertility (The Cancerbackup fact sheet). This leaflet will offer you some additional local information about sperm banking. The choice to have fertility treatment is yours. We can advise you about sperm banking and refer you to the specialist clinic for more detailed information, discussion and sperm collection and storage.

## Sperm Banking

### Why does my sperm need to be stored?

Cancer and its treatments can sometimes lower the number of sperm produced leading to infertility. In the majority of cases this is only temporary and the sperm count will return to normal within two years of finishing treatment. However, for a number of men who receive chemotherapy the sperm count will not recover, resulting in infertility. Successful sperm banking before treatment can preserve the possibility of fathering a child at a later date using the stored sperm should this happen to you.

### What is sperm banking?

Sperm banking is the preservation (or saving) of sperm by freezing so it may be used at some time in the future for artificial insemination or other assisted reproduction techniques.

### What will happen when I attend the fertility clinic?

You will have a consultation with a specialist and will be given the opportunity to discuss your fertility concerns and ask any questions about their procedures. If you have a partner, it may be a good idea for them to accompany you so they can be present during these discussions.

You should not ejaculate for at least 72 hours prior to your visit as you will be asked to produce a sperm sample for analysis and storage. This is done via masturbation into a container in a private room at the clinic. You will be given complete privacy to do this and your partner may accompany you if you wish. The number of visits you will need to make to the clinic will depend upon the urgency with which you need to start your treatment and the judgment of the fertility specialist. It is possible for you to attend immediately after your first cycle of treatment, if required, as the testis will still contain some healthy sperm produced **before** the chemotherapy.

The sperm sample is produced through masturbation and not everyone is able to produce a sample in such unusual circumstances. It will be understood that you are under considerable physical and emotional stress, and you should not feel embarrassed if this happens to you. It may be possible to make a further visit to the clinic.

Some men have a naturally low sperm count and it is possible that you could be informed that you are infertile and are unable to bank any sperm.

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### **What about the quality of the sperm?**

Storing sperm of good quality gives a realistic chance of fathering a child at a later date through assisted conception. However, no pregnancy is guaranteed. Having cancer should not affect the quality of your sperm. However, occasionally, due to illness, sperm quality may have deteriorated. Freezing and then thawing sperm can also cause a percentage of them to stop moving.

You can be reassured that you cannot pass on cancer to a partner via your sperm and there has been no link seen between children conceived after chemotherapy and problems at birth or in the baby's development.

### **Do I need any tests before I can bank my sperm?**

The Human Fertilisation and Embryology Association (HFEA) require that the blood of men storing sperm is screened for HIV, hepatitis B and hepatitis C. This is to preserve the safety of any future partners and children conceived using the sperm. Your team of doctors and nurses will arrange this for you. If you have any concerns regarding giving your consent for these tests, please discuss this with your doctor or nurse and we can arrange for you to see a counsellor experienced in these matters.

### **What happens in the future?**

Fertility can be slow to recover after treatment and we would not recommend retesting your sperm count until two years after completing chemotherapy. At this point a result would provide the long term picture of your fertility. If you are fertile, you may decide to ask for your stored sperm to be destroyed. If the result suggests your sperm count is low or absent, the standard practice is to store your semen until you reach the age of 55.

It is essential you keep the fertility clinic notified of any changes in your circumstances, such as a change of address and GP, as they will need to contact you in the future.

### **What about funding?**

At present the NHS will meet the cost of the initial consultations, blood tests and storage for the first year. Further funding for fertility treatment is under review and you should discuss this with a member of your oncology team at the appropriate time.

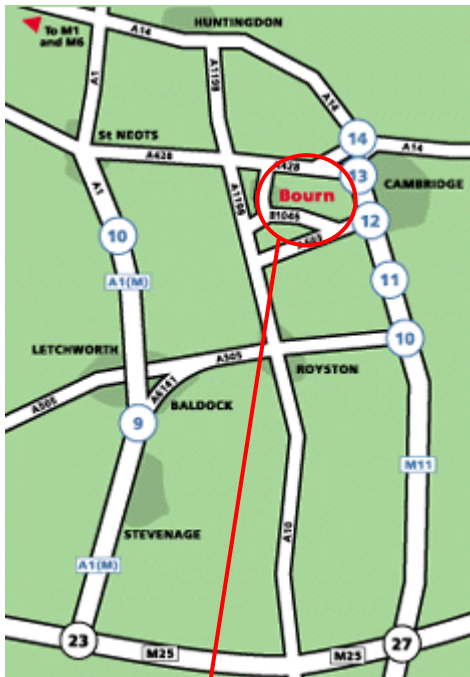
## **Legal Requirements**

There are a number of legal requirements about the storage of sperm. You will be asked to sign consent forms agreeing to treatment and storage of your sperm. You will also be asked what you would like to do with the stored samples in the event of your premature death.

## Oncology Directorate and Haematology SDU

### Finding Bourn Hall

Below are some directions and maps that may help you locate Bourn Hall



#### From London

A1/A1M northbound to Wyboston  
Approx. 5 miles later: A428 to Cambridge  
Approx. 3 miles later: Straight over at Caxton Gibbet roundabout  
Continue past Cambourne to right turn signposted to Bourn.  
Through village, turn right opposite The Willow Tree restaurant/public house, signposted Bourn Hall Clinic.

#### From London via M11 and Stansted Airport

M11 northbound  
Exit Junction 13, signposted A1303/A428  
Follow A428 in direction of Bedford  
Straight over at next two roundabouts, follow sign to Bourn on left after Bourn Airfield.  
Through village, turn right opposite The Willow Tree restaurant/public house, signposted Bourn Hall Clinic.



#### From the North of England

A1/A1M southbound  
London (E) M11  
Huntingdon/Cambridge A14 (filter left)  
A14 Felixstowe/Harwich/Cambridge, follows signs for A1198 to Royston. At the junction with the A428 to Cambridge (the Caxton Gibbet roundabout), turn left towards Cambridge, continue past Cambourne, to turn right signposted Bourn.  
Alternative route is to continue down the A1 to St Neots/Wyboston, and turn left onto the A428. Travel past St Neots and approximately 8 miles to the Caxton Gibbet roundabout, continue towards Cambridge past Cambourne, turn right to Bourn village.  
Through village, turn right opposite The Willow Tree restaurant/public house, signposted Bourn Hall Clinic.

Please ask if you require this information in other languages, large print or audio format: 01223 216032 or [patient.information@addenbrookes.nhs.uk](mailto:patient.information@addenbrookes.nhs.uk)

Potete chiedere di ottenere queste informazioni in altre lingue, in stampato grande o in audiocassetta.

### Italian

若你需要本信息的繁體中文、大字體或音訊格式的版本，請要求索取。

### Cantonese

તમને આ માહિતી બીજી ભાષાઓમાં, મોટા અક્ષરોમાં અથવા સાંભળી શકાય એવા માધ્યમ (ઓડીઓ ફોર્મેટ)માં જોઈતી હોય તો કૃપા કરીને પૂછો.

### Gujarati

تکایه پرسیار بکه نه گهر نهوزانیاریهت دهوی به زمانیکی تر . به بیته گهوره یانیش به شیوهی دهنگ

### Kurdish

اگر آپ کو یہ معلومات دوسری زبانوں میں، بڑے الفاظ کی اشاعت میں یا آڈیو ٹیپ پر درکار ہوں تو براے مہربانی اس کیلئے درخواست کریں۔

### Urdu



Addenbrooke's is smoke-free. Please do not smoke anywhere on the site.

For advice on quitting, contact your GP or the NHS smoking helpline free, 0800 169 0169

Document history			
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