



Fact sheet 1: Considering sperm donation?

This fact sheet provides information for men thinking about sperm donation. Helping people to have a family is a significant commitment that requires careful consideration. Take time to think and talk about it with your partner / relatives so that you understand what sperm donation means for you, your family and families that receive your donation.

Access to information

You must consent to the release of your identifying information (name and date of birth) to become a sperm donor. A person born as a result of your donation can request this information when they reach 16 years of age.

The fertility clinic is required by law to provide your details to the Department of Health. This information is recorded in a secure computer database called the Reproductive Technology Registers, which can only be accessed by specially appointed officers.

You can choose to provide more information about yourself by joining the Voluntary Register (voluntaryregister.health.wa.gov.au) when a child is born as a result of your donation. Openness to additional information can be valuable to donor-conceived people. There are a number of options that you may wish to consider. Additional information can be found in [fact sheet 7 - Access to Information](#).

What does donation involve?

In Western Australia (WA) you must be at least 18 years of age to become a sperm donor. Fertility clinics in WA will not usually accept men over 50 years old, however this can be different for each clinic. By law you cannot be paid for sperm donation. The clinic can only offer you reasonable expenses that are associated with your donation.

Donation programmes

Most fertility clinics have a donor coordinator, who is often the first point of contact for people who are thinking about sperm donation. A list of clinics is available on the Reproductive Technology Council website (rtc.org.au).

Unknown and known donors

Unknown donors are volunteers who provide donations to the clinic and are unknown to the people who use their donation. People sometimes bring their own donor to the clinic. This might be a relative or friend. This is termed known donation as the donor and the person/s who receive the donation (recipient/s) are known to each other. There are special requirements for known donation due to the close relationship (see [fact sheet 8 - Counselling](#)).

Counselling

You and your partner (if any) will see an approved counsellor who will help you think through the possible implications and consequences of becoming a sperm donor. This is so you can make an informed and carefully considered decision. [Fact sheet 8 - Counselling](#) - outlines the main issues you may discuss with the counsellor.

Health requirements

A donor profile is created from your physical description, health and background such as education, hobbies and interests (see [fact sheet 5 - Donor Profile Example](#)). This helps people decide which donor to choose.

You need to meet certain conditions to become a sperm donor. This includes a medical check-up, completing a questionnaire (see [fact sheet 6 - Lifestyle Questionnaire Example](#)) and screening tests for:

- blood group
- human immunodeficiency virus (HIV)
- human T-lymphotropic virus (HTLV)
- hepatitis B and C
- sexually transmitted infections (STIs)
- bacterial infections
- genetic conditions (i.e. cystic fibrosis)
- quality of sperm

If you are accepted into the donor program, you will attend the clinic to provide a number of samples. The samples will be frozen and not used (quarantined) until you have had further blood tests six months after the donation. This ensures that you are free from any infection that could be passed on through your donation.

It is important to understand that standards for sperm donation are very high. The clinic will discuss the reasons with you if you are not accepted into a donor program.

Your rights and responsibilities

If your donation to the fertility clinic results in the birth of a child, the law explicitly states that the woman who gives birth to the child and her partner (if any) are the parents of the child. You have no legal or financial rights or responsibilities and your name will not be listed on the birth certificate.

You are required to disclose information about any known genetic or medical conditions you have. There may be serious legal consequences if you fail to disclose this information.

You are entitled to know the gender, year of birth, number of families and number of children born from your donation. Your fertility clinic can provide you with this information.

- Your donation can help up to five families have children (not including your own).
- There is no limit to the number of children in each family.
- You must inform the clinic of any other donations (in Australia and overseas).
- You can direct the clinic to provide your donation under certain conditions.
- You can change your consent up until the time your donation is used.
- In WA, a clinic must not knowingly use your donation after your death.

Development of a serious medical condition

If you or a close relative develops a serious medical condition, you need to consider the possible implications for any child born as a result of your donation. You should discuss this with your doctor, and the fertility clinic where you made the donation, to decide the best course of action.

How can I donate?

Contact a licensed fertility clinic to find out more about sperm donation. A list of clinics is available on the Reproductive Technology Council website (rtc.org.au).