

A Guide to Cancer and Fertility

FOR FEMALE ADOLESCENT AND
YOUNG ADULT PATIENTS



Resources

Connecticut Children's Comprehensive
Fertility and Sexual Health Team
www.connecticutchildrens.org/fertility

Save My Fertility
www.savemyfertility.org

Take Charge
www.letstakecharge.org

Financial Help
Fertility Within Reach
www.fertilitywithinreach.org

Verna's Purse/ReproTech
www.reprotech.com

Livestrong
www.livestrong.org/fertility

Cancer can be scary and confusing. Your provider will go over common side effects from your cancer treatment, and one of those side effects may be problems with fertility. Because everyone is different, talk to your oncologist about your specific situation. *We are here to help you get through this!*

Q: Do I have to delay treatment?

A: In many cases, no.

Q: Will fertility preservation impact my cancer and/or treatment?

A: It will not affect your cancer or treatment.

Q: Can I wait until after I finish my treatment to decide about fertility preservation?

A: It is important to talk to your doctor about your risk for fertility problems before you start cancer treatment, as some preservation options may not work once you start and/or after you finish treatment.

For more information, please visit us online:

CONNECTICUTCHILDRENS.ORG/FERTILITY

connecticutchildrens.org

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ATENCIÓN: si habla español, tiene a su disposición servicios gratuitos de asistencia lingüística. Llame al 1.800.234.0780 (TTY: 1.800.545.8330).

UWAGA: Je eli mówisz po polsku, moesz skorzysta z bezpłatnej pomocy j zykowej. Zadzwo pod numer 1.800.234.0780 (TTY: 1.800.545.8330).

 **Connecticut
Children's** | Center for Cancer
& Blood Disorders



You have options!

The option best for you will depend on your age, development, and treatment status.

Established methods

Oocyte cryopreservation

This involves taking hormone shots to make you ovulate. Then, eggs will be removed during a minor procedure and frozen for future use. It takes 2-3 weeks, therefore may not work for patients who need to start cancer treatment right away.

Embryo cryopreservation

This is the same procedure as oocyte preservation but includes fertilizing the egg with sperm before freezing.

Ovarian transposition

This involves moving the ovaries to a location where they will not be directly in the radiation field.

Radiation shielding

This involves using a removable lead shield over the ovaries to protect them during radiation therapy.

Ovarian tissue cryopreservation (OTC)

This is the newest available option. It includes removing tissue from the ovary to freeze and re-implant in the future. It is a surgery but may be done at the same time as other procedures you may need.

Other Family Building Options

Adoption, surrogacy, donor eggs, or embryos. Create your own family any way you choose!

Treatment and Fertility

Cancer treatment, including radiation and chemotherapy, can sometimes cause problems with fertility. *Fertility is a word used to describe your ability to have children naturally.* It is hard to know exactly what will happen with your fertility after treatment, but we have ways to decide how at risk you are for future fertility problems.

We also have ways to help protect your fertility before you start treatment. *This is called fertility preservation.* Fertility preservation is a fast-paced field with new technologies and research emerging all the time. It is safe and exciting to offer these opportunities to you!

So, what is my risk for fertility problems?

Everyone is different. Your provider will classify you as 'low' 'moderate' or 'high' risk for developing fertility problems in the future. Your risk level depends on:

- Your age at the time of treatment
- Which chemotherapy treatments you will receive
- How much chemotherapy you will receive
- If you receive radiation:
 - Where on your body it will be
 - How much you will receive