

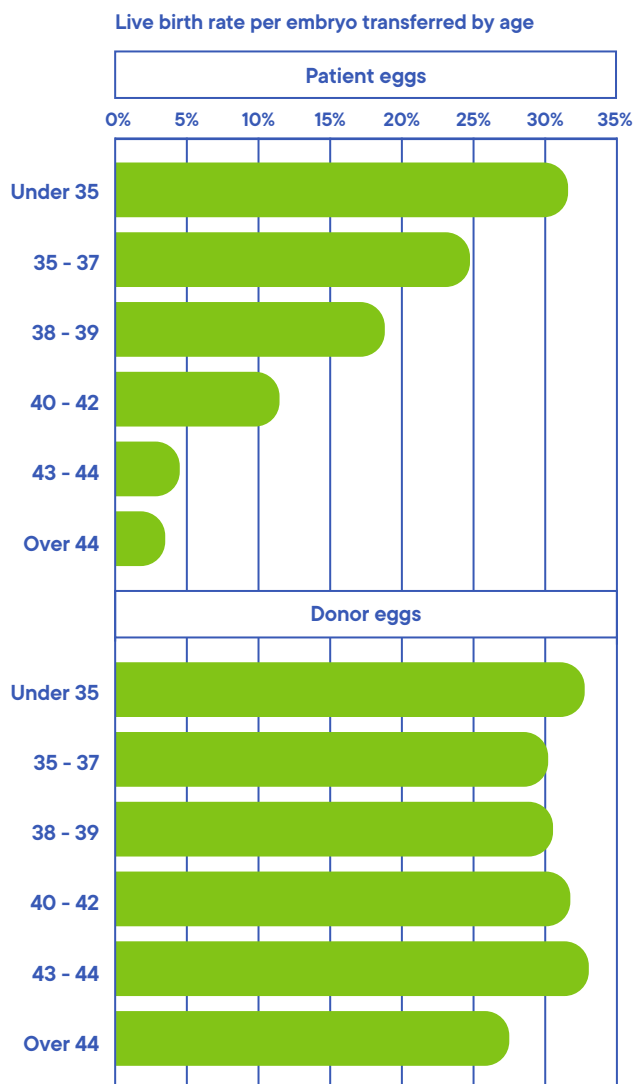


How does it work

For women who can't become pregnant with their own eggs, egg donation can be an option. Regulation around egg donation varies between countries. In many countries egg donation is anonymous, so the recipient and child will not know the donor's identity, but an increasing number of countries have made donation non-anonymous so the child can trace their donor at a certain age, usually 18.

Egg donors will have a number of health checks. Their blood group will be determined, and they will be screened for common genetic diseases and sexually transmitted infections. In almost all countries there is a limit to the number of families a donor can contribute to, and the legal status of the donor is very clear; they will have no legal or financial responsibility for any children.

EGG DONATION



Who needs egg donation?

There are several reasons for needing donor eggs, including:

- Women who are no longer producing eggs due to age or medical conditions
- People affected by genetic disorders that they want to avoid passing on to their children
- Women who have had repeated unsuccessful fertility treatments
- Same-sex male couples and single men wishing to have a child through surrogacy

How successful is egg donation?

In Vitro Fertilisation (IVF) success mostly depends on the age of the woman whose eggs are used. Egg donors are in most cases under the age of 35. That's why the chance of having a baby with donated eggs is relatively high. The Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority (HFEA) data shows almost no difference in the live birth rate across ages using donor eggs, being around 30% per embryo transferred.



How is egg donation done?

Egg donation can only be done via a fertility clinic because the donor needs hormone injections to stimulate her ovaries to produce multiple eggs and an egg retrieval procedure (see information leaflet on IVF).

Most commonly donated eggs are frozen after retrieval. They are then thawed and mixed with sperm to form embryos when the recipient is ready for embryo transfer.

What are the risks for donors

Egg donation is not risk free and can be physically and emotionally demanding. That's why donor eggs are in short supply in countries where donors can't be financially compensated. People who need egg donation therefore often travel to countries where the donors are paid, such as Spain and Eastern Europe.

What to tell children born from donation?

It is important for people using donor eggs or sperm to be open with their children about how they were conceived. Ideally, discussions about how they came to be should start at a young age.

When people find out later in life, or by accident, that they were donor-conceived this can seriously affect their relationship with their families and make them question their identity. It is very possible that a person who did not know they were donor conceived finds this out through genetic testing (ancestry testing). With genetic testing, donor-conceived people can find genetic relatives, including half siblings and donors.

The Donor Conception Network has developed many resources to help parents of donor conceived children tell their children about their origins.

<https://www.dcnetwork.org/>



Why would someone become an egg donor?

In many countries donors can be paid but women also donate for purely altruistic reasons. This can be because they have a friend or relative with fertility problems. Many egg donors report feeling a sense of pride, knowing the joy they have brought to people who could not otherwise have become parents. Egg donation is highly regulated in most countries, ensuring that legal and medical standards are followed.

Egg donors usually have to :

- Be aged between 21 and 35 years
- Have good physical and mental health
- Be a non-smoker and not use recreational drugs
- Be willing to undergo medical and psychological evaluation

It is important for anyone who has donated eggs to tell their family about the donation in case they get contacted by the donor conceived child. This is more likely now because of ancestry testing.

Further information

<https://fertilityeurope.eu/>
<https://www.dcnetwork.org/>

