

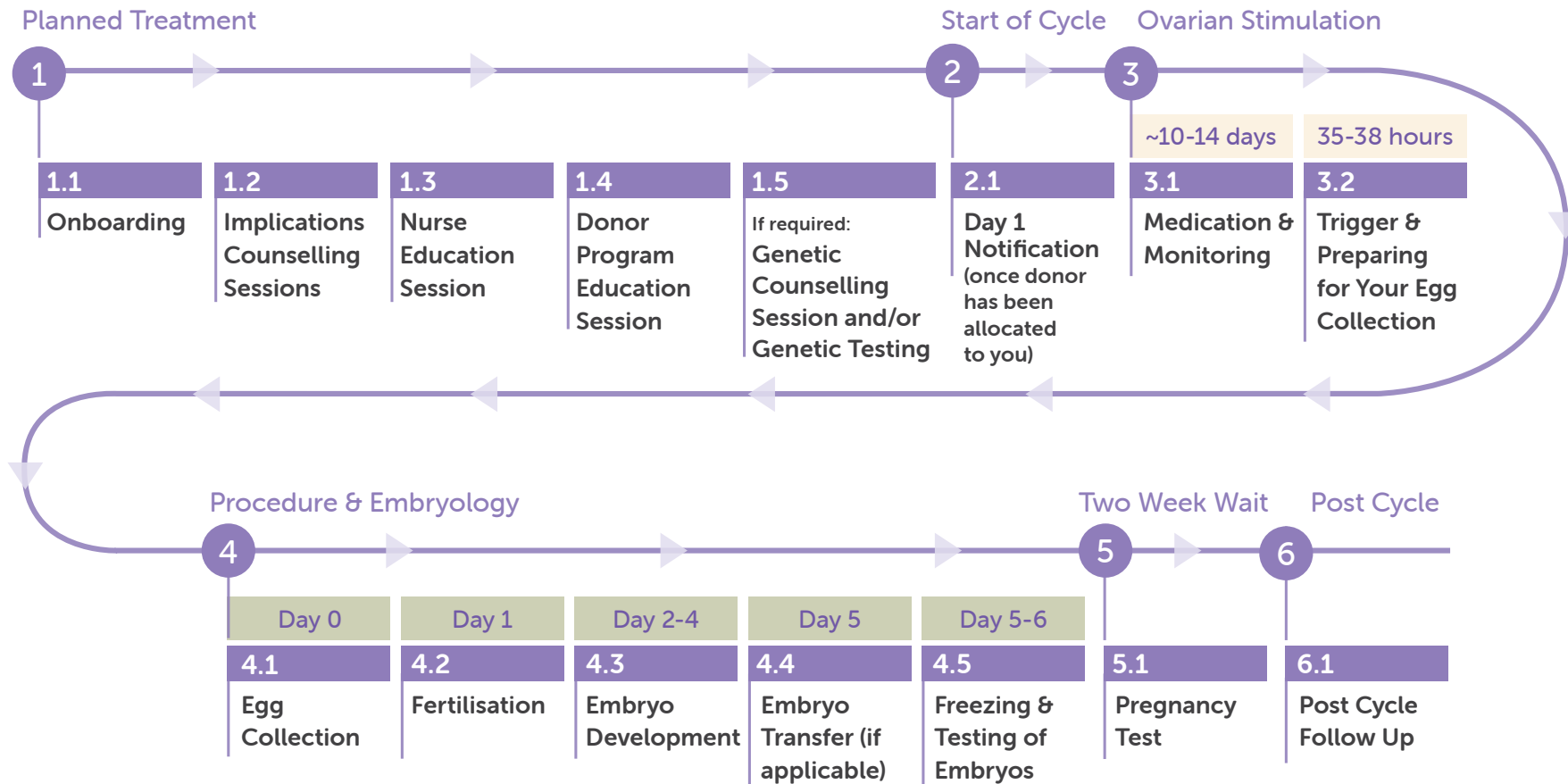


Your
cycle navigator

Queensland Fertility Group's guide to your IVF Cycle using a Sperm Donor



Your Treatment Cycle: What to Expect



What is the 'Cycle Navigator'?

The Cycle Navigator outlines the key stages and activities you'll likely undertake during your IVF treatment. It offers an overview of what to expect at each step and provides helpful resources along the way.

This is a general guide, and your individual journey may vary. Your dedicated care team will provide personalised instructions and support throughout your treatment and can answer any questions you may have.

How can we improve the 'Cycle Navigator'?

Have your say [here](#)

1 Planned Treatment

1.1 Onboarding

Your to-dos

If you are eligible for a Medicare rebate, ensure you have a GP referral for the entirety of your IVF cycle.

Ensure you have had a cervical screening test with your GP or Specialist and have had screening bloods to check for infectious disease.

If applicable, your partner will need to complete screening bloods as requested by your Specialist.

Your Specialist may request that you do further blood tests for Genetic Carrier Screening.

Begin taking an antenatal supplement containing folic acid.

Complete your registration with QFG for yourself and your partner (if applicable) and validate your identity.

Book your first Implications Counselling Session.

Things to consider

- ◆ Some of your blood tests may be bulk billed if you are Medicare eligible. Your GP or Specialist should be able to advise.

Links to further information

Video: What can I do to prepare for fertility treatment

Genetic Carrier Screening

IVF Costs and Fees

Donor Programme | Queensland Fertility Group

Donor Sperm for Fertility Treatment - QLD Fertility Group

Payment milestones

Payment of first Counselling Session.

1.2 Implications Counselling Sessions

Your to-dos

If this is your first time in the QFG Donor Program, attend two implications counselling sessions, two weeks apart, with one of our dedicated fertility counsellors.

Forward your counselling report to the QFG Donor Team if you've previously attended counselling at another clinic.

Ensure your partner (if applicable) attends both counselling sessions with you.

Schedule a Nurse Education Session and Donor Program Education Session after your first Implications Counselling Session.

Book your second Implications Counselling Session at least two weeks after your first session.

Prepare any questions for your counsellor prior to your Implications Counselling Session.

Pay the Donor Coordination Fee, a one-time payment covering your second Implications Counselling Session, Donor Program Education Session, and website access.

Things to consider

- ◆ During your Implications Counselling Sessions, you can discuss the social, legal, and psychological aspects of accessing a sperm donor at QFG.
- ◆ Your Donor Coordination Fee is a one-time payment that covers your second Implications Counselling Session, Donor Program Education Session, and website access.

- ◆ Follow-up sessions may be required; your counsellor will discuss this with you.

Links to further information

Counsellors | Queensland Fertility Group

Fertility counselling & support services

Payment milestones

Payment of Donor Coordination Fee.

1 Planned Treatment

1.3 Nurse Education Session

Your to-dos

If this is your first IVF cycle, attend a Nurse Education Session.

Discuss any medications you are taking with your nurse to ensure they are considered in your treatment.

During your Nurse Education Session, you will be advised on how to complete your treatment consents. For any subsequent IVF cycles, your care team will advise you how to update and sign consents again. You must complete your consent forms before you start your IVF treatment.

At this session, your nurse will advise you on how to organise the collection of your medication and give advice on storage.

Review your cost estimate and financial consent that will be emailed to you. If you would like clarification on the information in these documents, then please call your local clinic care team.

Things to consider

- ◆ Your mental health is important; our counselling team is here to support you throughout your IVF Journey, please don't hesitate to schedule an appointment with them if required.
- ◆ We recommend that your partner (if applicable) attend this session with you. If they are also undergoing treatment, then they will need to attend the session.

Links to further information

- ◆ Prior to your Nurse Education Session, prepare any questions you may have about your IVF treatment.
- ◆ [IVF Process & Treatment](#)
- ◆ [Meet our counsellors](#)

Payment milestones

Payment to the pharmacy for medications.

1.4 Donor Program Education Session

Your to-dos

Attend a Donor Program Education Session if this is your first cycle accessing a sperm donor at QFG.

Complete, sign, and return the Sperm Donor Selection Interview Checklist after your appointment so your website access can be emailed to you.

Access the donor website to browse and select your donor. Website access is available for one month at a time; if you need it reset, email spermsupport@virtushealth.com.au

Make a reservation payment once you've chosen your donor to secure your selection.

Select your donor, then confirm the allocation with the donor team. This must take place prior to your treatment commencing.

Things to consider

- ◆ During your Donor Program Education Session, the team will guide you through viewing donors, using the website, understanding genetic information, and selecting and reserving a donor.
- ◆ Before choosing your donor, review the costs of donor vials and any ongoing storage fees with the Donor Team.
- ◆ The Donor Team will explain the option of setting aside vials for future family expansion, including associated costs.
- ◆ If you have a partner, we suggest they join you for the session. If your partner is also undergoing treatment through the program, attendance is required.

Payment milestones

Reservation payment for selected donor

Payment of Semen Storage – billed once selected donor is allocated to you

1 Planned Treatment

1.5 If required: Genetic Counselling Session and/or Genetic Testing

Your to-dos

Share a copy of your genetic testing results (if you've already had testing) with the QFG Donor Team before your Genetic Counselling session.

Attend a Genetic Counselling session if your chosen donor has a genetic variant.

Decide whether to proceed with genetic testing; if you do, results usually take 4–6 weeks, and your treatment cycle can begin once results are available.

Things to consider

- ◆ During your Genetic Counselling session, the counsellor will explain any genetic variant(s) found in your donor, what they mean for you, and discuss your options.
- ◆ The Genetic Counsellor will share test results and a summary with you, your Specialist, and the Donor Team, and can discuss them further if needed.
- ◆ Genetic testing is not mandatory, but your counsellor will guide you through the options to help you make an informed choice.

Payment milestones

Genetic Counselling Fee (if required)

Genetic Testing Fee (if required)



2 Start of Cycle

2.1 Day 1 Notification

Your to-dos

Call or email your care team to notify them on the first day of your period.

Wait to start any medications until you have been advised by your care team.

If you have not yet collected your medication, please do so.

Things to consider

- ◆ If your period starts outside business hours, please contact us on the next business day.
- ◆ If you are having intercourse during your IVF cycle, we advise that you use protection to avoid the chances of a multiple pregnancy.
- ◆ Please ensure your chosen donor has been allocated to you. Your treatment can only commence once this has been done.

Payment milestones

Full payment of IVF Cycle

3 Ovarian Stimulation

3.1 Medication and Monitoring

Your to-dos

Follow any instructions for beginning medication given to you by your care team.

Attend any blood test or ultrasound appointments as advised by your care team. Prior to follicle tracking ultrasound, empty your bladder.

If you forget to take your medications, take them as soon as you remember and notify your care team. However, if you forget to take your trigger, do not take it until you have spoken with your care team.

Keep track of your medication supplies. Inform your care team if you believe you will need another prescription.

Monitor yourself for side effects of medications, and drink plenty of water to remain hydrated. Contact your care team if you have any concerns.

Things to consider

- ◆ Consider setting a reminder on your phone to take your medications at the right times.
- ◆ You will need approximately 3-4 visits to the clinic for blood tests and ultrasounds for monitoring purposes.
- ◆ After each appointment, your Specialist will review the results. If your treatment is updated, your care team will contact you.
- ◆ Your Specialist will prescribe you enough medication for your IVF cycle; however, if your dose of medication is changed during your cycle, you may require more.
- ◆ The time frame for taking ovarian stimulation medication is different for each person and varies on average from 10 to 14 days.
- ◆ There is no need to fast before your blood tests.

Links to further information

[Medication Videos](#)

[Medicine Information Leaflets](#)

[Video: Ovarian Stimulation](#)

3 Ovarian Stimulation

3.2 Trigger and Preparing for Your Egg Collection

Your to-dos

Take your trigger at the time specified by your care team. The time is very specific as it correlates with your egg collection time.

Follow the instructions given to you by your care team regarding your other medications.

Check that you've received information about your admission, arrival time, and location of the day surgery.

Expect to receive information from your care team about your egg collection procedure including fasting instructions.

If you have private health insurance, contact them to confirm your out-of-pocket expense for admission to the day hospital.

Things to consider

- ◆ Your trigger injection is generally taken in the evening, after business hours. It can be helpful to familiarise yourself with this injection before the clinic closes so you can ask your care team for advice if you need it.
- ◆ If you are taking any other medications, your care team will give you instructions regarding stopping or maintaining these.

Links to further information

[Video - Preparing for egg collection day](#)

Payment milestones

Payment to Anaesthetist.



4 Procedures and Embryology

4.1 Egg Collection (Day 0)

Your to-dos

You will be given information about where to attend for your egg collection procedure. Please arrive at the time that has been allocated to you.

Arrange for your partner or a support person to drive you home after your procedure, as you will be having an anaesthetic on this day.

Bring along your photo ID, private health insurance details, and any medications you might be taking.

Avoid perfumes, scented lotions, and deodorants, and leave any valuables at home.

Avoid Nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAID's) like ibuprofen or aspirin, as they can increase the risk of bleeding.

Call us immediately if you experience heavy bleeding or pain after egg collection. Mild cramping or spotting in the days following your egg collection can be normal.

Things to consider

- ◆ We recommend you dress in loose clothing for comfort after your egg collection.
- ◆ Before you leave the day surgery, you will be informed of how many eggs were collected and what the embryology steps involve.
- ◆ Resting at home after your egg collection is highly recommended to support physical recovery and allow the body to heal from the procedure.
- ◆ You can use a heat pack and take paracetamol for any abdominal discomfort or pain.
- ◆ We encourage you to drink plenty of water and consider increasing the fibre in your diet to help reduce constipation caused by increased hormone levels. If you have a history of constipation, speak to your care team for any additional advice on management of symptoms.

Links to further information

[Video - IVF Egg Collection](#)

Payment milestones

Day surgery payment on the day.

4.2 Fertilisation (Day 1)

Your to-dos

Mild cramping in your abdomen in the days following your egg collection is normal. Call us if you are worried about any of the following symptoms:

- Severe nausea and vomiting
- Increased abdominal bloating
- Diarrhoea
- Shortness of breath
- Increasing thirst
- Decreasing urine output

Expect contact from an embryologist on Day 1 to update you on the fertilisation of your eggs. They are available to answer any of your questions and discuss the next steps.

Expect a call from a nurse, in the coming days, to discuss your recovery and advise you on any pain relief you may require.

If you are planning for a fresh embryo transfer on this cycle, your care team will advise you when to begin taking progesterone medication.

Things to consider

- ◆ Most patients will report feeling well enough to return to work the day after their egg collection. Listen to your body and contact us if you think you may need a medical certificate to take more time off work.
- ◆ If you miss a phone call, a message will be left asking you to call back.

4.3 Embryo Development (Day 2-4)

Your to-dos

If you are planning to have a fresh embryo transferred on this cycle, your care team will give you a time for your transfer on day 5 and inform you of any instructions you need to follow

Things to consider

Links to further information

[Embryology & Embryo Development](#)

[Video - How are embryos chosen?](#)

4 Procedures and Embryology

4.4 Embryo Transfer - If applicable (Day 5)

Your to-dos

Follow any instructions given to you by your care team to prepare for your embryo transfer.

Avoid perfumes, scented lotions, and deodorants, as embryos are sensitive to chemicals and smells.

Continue on any prescribed medication, as well as your progesterone medication, as it will help support the uterine lining and early pregnancy.

Arrive for your embryo transfer at the time allocated to you by your care team.

Ensure you have a full bladder for this procedure.

Things to consider

- ◆ It is not necessary to rest after your embryo transfer; however, some people prefer to have this day off work. If you are unsure, contact your care team for guidance.
- ◆ Avoid hot baths and saunas until you have had your pregnancy test, as high temperatures could interfere with embryo implantation.

Links to further information

[Video: Embryo Transfer FAQ's - Fertile Minds](#)

- ◆ You are not required to have a partner or support person in attendance with you; however, they may be present if you wish.

Payment milestones

Day Surgery payment on the day.

4.5 Freezing and Testing of Embryos (Day 5-6)

Your to-dos

Expect contact from an embryologist to update you on the freezing of your embryos.

If your embryos are undergoing any genetic testing, the results will take approximately 14 days to come back. You can expect to receive a phone call around this time with your results.

Things to consider

- ◆ Embryos are commonly frozen on Day 5 or 6 based on their development. This can vary among embryos even from the same cycle.
- ◆ Your embryos will be frozen while you wait for the results of the genetic testing.

Links to further information

[Video: Freezing your embryos](#)

[Video: What are the different types of PGT genetic testing](#)

5 Two week wait

5.1 Pregnancy Test

Your to-dos

Attend a pregnancy blood test, as advised by your care team.

Expect a call from a nurse on the same day as your blood test to discuss your results.

Things to consider

- ◆ We encourage you not to do a home pregnancy test as these are not as accurate and do not provide as much information as a blood test during IVF.
- ◆ Your period may start around the time your pregnancy test is due. If you have mild spotting, it is important you continue on your progesterone medication and attend your pregnancy blood test. If the bleeding is heavier than spotting, please get in touch with your care team for advice.
- ◆ It is natural to feel a mix of emotions, so give yourself time to process how you feel and reach out to your loved ones or our counsellor for support.

Links to further information

Video: Coping with the 2-week wait

Blog Post: Taking a pregnancy test and the tell-tale signs you're expecting



6.1 Post Cycle Follow Up

Your to-dos

Negative Pregnancy Test

Follow any medication instructions that your care team has given you.

If you wish to discuss your IVF cycle and potential next steps, schedule a follow-up consultation with your fertility specialist.

Once you receive your results, please notify the Donor Team.

Positive Pregnancy Test

Follow any medication instructions that your care team has given you.

Your care team will inform you when and where to go for your first ultrasound scan, which is generally done at around 7 weeks gestation.

Please contact the Donor Team to inform them of your pregnancy.

Following the birth of your baby (or babies), please get in touch with the Donor Team to let them know. They'll also guide you on how to notify the international sperm bank, if this applies to you

Things to consider

Negative Pregnancy Test

- ◆ It is natural to feel a mix of emotions, so give yourself time to process how you feel and reach out to your loved ones or our counsellor for support.
- ◆ Some people may feel ready to go straight into another IVF cycle; others may choose to take a break. Take a moment to consider what is right for you.
- ◆ Continue to store any leftover medications as instructed, in case you can use them in a future IVF cycle.
- ◆ If you're considering further treatment, please speak with the Donor Team about the donor's ongoing availability or to reset your website access to select a new donor.

Positive Pregnancy Test

- ◆ Take time to acknowledge the positive result and celebrate this significant step forward.
- ◆ It is natural to feel a mix of emotions, so give yourself time to process how you feel and reach out to your loved ones or our counsellor for support.
- ◆ Your care team is still available to help you with any questions or concerns during these early weeks of pregnancy. Reach out to them at a time that is convenient for you.
- ◆ If you're thinking about growing your family in the future, please get in touch with the Donor Team to talk about reserving additional vials of the same donor (if applicable) and the costs involved.

Payment milestones

PGT bill sent for tested embryos (if applicable)

Expect Medicare Rebate around about this time. We will submit it to Medicare on your behalf.

Expect to receive a bill for the freezing and storage of your embryos if you have done this.

You will continue to receive a bill every 6 months while you still have eggs, sperm or embryos in storage.

Support Details

For enquiries, please call:

BRISBANE LOCATIONS:

Everton Park
(07) 3015 3193

Watkins Medical Centre
(07) 3015 3195

Wharf St
(07) 3015 3000

Cairns
(07) 4034 0900

Gold Coast
(07) 5564 8455

Gympie
(07) 5437 7244

Hervey Bay
(07) 5437 7244

Mackay
07 4977 5151

Sunshine Coast
(07) 5314 3500

Toowoomba
(07) 4638 5243

Townsville
(07) 4772 8900

QLD DONOR TEAM

spermsupport@virtushealth.com.au
(07) 3015 3002



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