

Fertility Preservation for Trans & Gender Diverse Youth



What is fertility preservation?

- Fertility preservation means saving eggs, sperm, or other body parts that help make babies. This way, you can use them later if you want to have children.

How does gender-affirming care affect fertility?

- Some medicines and surgeries for gender-affirming care can make it harder to have biological children in the future.
- Before starting these treatments, some people freeze their sperm or eggs so they can have biological kids later.

When should I start?

- Talk to your doctor about fertility preservation before starting gender-affirming medicines. Starting early can make the process easier and more likely to work. If you want to save sperm or eggs, you need to do it before certain surgeries, like removing the testes or ovaries.

What if I don't want children or want to adopt?

- It's okay if you don't want children or aren't sure yet. Some people change their minds about having kids. That's why it might be a good idea to save sperm or eggs just in case.
- Some transgender adults say they wish they preserved their sperm or eggs.
- You can also become a parent by adopting or fostering a child.
- If you save your sperm or eggs, you could think about surrogacy. Surrogacy means someone else carries the pregnancy for you.

How do puberty blockers affect fertility preservation?

- Puberty blockers stop the body from producing sex hormones. These blockers can make it harder to save sperm or eggs. You can only collect sperm or eggs after you're in the later stages of puberty. If you want to save sperm or eggs but you started puberty blockers early, you will need to stop taking them. This will let puberty continue until later stages to be able to collect the sperm or eggs.
- **Talk to your medical provider if you are considering using or have used a puberty blocker.**

What if I have already started taking hormones?

- You can still save sperm or eggs after starting hormone therapy. Talk to your doctor to see what will work best for you.
- If you're taking testosterone, you'll need to stop it for about 3-6 months. You will take other hormones for a couple of weeks during the egg collection process.
- If you're taking estrogen or an androgen blocker, you will probably need to stop both for about 3-6 months.

Center for Transyouth Health and Development

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What is the collection process like?

- **If you have ovaries:** You will start by taking medicine for about 10 to 14 days to help your body make eggs. You will visit the fertility clinic a few times to check how things are going. After these visits, the clinic will collect the eggs during a small surgery. This process can take about a month or more.
- **If you have testicles:** You will usually give at least 1 sperm sample at the fertility clinic. You will do this by ejaculating into a container. The clinic may ask you for more samples over a few weeks. If you feel uncomfortable doing this at the clinic, you might be able to use a kit at home. Sometimes, a doctor can get sperm from your testicles through a small surgery.
- Make sure to talk to the fertility clinic about your options. There are multiple ways to collect sperm or eggs. Remember, you have control over the process and can speak up for yourself!

How much does the process cost?

In California, insurance plans like HMO and PPO can cover fertility preservation before starting some treatments. Medi-Cal does not cover it. Here's how much it might cost without insurance in 2025:

- Sperm Banking (collecting sperm): \$500 - \$1000
- Sperm Storage (storing sperm): \$150 - \$500 per year
- Egg Freezing (collecting eggs): \$10,000 - \$15,000
- Egg Storage (storing eggs): \$500 - \$1000 per year

What are the next steps?

1. Contact your insurance company to ask about coverage. Find providers that are part of your plan and see if you need special approval.
2. Talk to your doctor if you need special approval.
3. Call a fertility clinic in your area to schedule your first visit.
4. If you're under 18, your parent(s) or guardian(s) will need to give permission.
5. Do any lab work the clinic asks for. It might be cheaper to do this at another lab like Quest Diagnostics or LabCorp. You can try to do it with your labs for gender-affirming treatments.
6. Go back to the fertility clinic for sperm or egg collection.
7. The clinic will check your sperm or eggs and tell you if they are viable or not.
8. Your sperm or eggs will be stored, so you can use them in the future if needed.

Need more information or resources?

- 20 Things Transgender People Might Want to Know About Fertility - <https://www.buzzfeed.com/carolynkylstra/transgender-fertility>
- Trans Fertility Co. – <https://transfertility.co/resources>
- Family Equality – Trans Family Building – <https://www.familyequality.org/family-building/trans-family-building/>
- Birthing and breast or chestfeeding Trans people and Allies (Facebook group) – <https://www.facebook.com/groups/TransReproductiveSupport/>
- Alliance for Fertility Preservation - <https://www.allianceforfertilitypreservation.org>
- Queer Birth Project - <https://www.facebook.com/QueerBirthProject/>

What providers and fertility programs are available to me?

These providers and programs are not endorsed by CHLA.

- HRC Fertility (USC affiliate) - <https://www.havingbabies.com/>
- USC Fertility – LGBT Fertility – <https://uscfertility.org/same-sex-family-building/>
- Meet Fellow (at home sperm banking - website NOT gender affirming) - <https://www.meetfellow.com/>
- Legacy (at home sperm banking) - <https://www.givelegacy.com/lgbtq-fertility/>
- UCLA Gender Health Program – <https://www.uclahealth.org/gender-health/reproductive-health>
- Fairfax Cryobank - <https://fairfaxcryobank.com/gender-affirming-hormone-replacement-therapy>