



### Oocyte Donor Agencies

There are many oocyte donor agencies, several of them in the Bay Area. Each of them has a pool of pre-screened egg donors from which you can make your selection. The donor applicants are typically young women in their twenties with low risk for disease transmission and substance abuse. Most of them have made the decision to become an oocyte donor based on a combination of the financial incentive and an altruistic need to help infertile couples. The oocyte donor agencies usually charge \$8,000 to \$12,000 (or more). The donor receives about half of this fee as compensation for the inconvenience the treatment will cause her.

Once you have selected your oocyte donor, she will be instructed by the agency to contact us directly to set up her initial consultation at Nova IVF. Depending on the oocyte donor agency, you may be able to decide whether the oocyte donation treatment will be totally anonymous, totally open (you may decide to meet the donor face to face) or somewhere in between (perhaps you will talk with her on the phone). Legally, anonymous oocyte donation is a very confidential treatment; it would take a court order for the recipient's identity to be revealed to the donor.

Since pregnancies after oocyte donation are indistinguishable from pregnancies conceived spontaneously, there are no questions regarding whose names to appear on the child's birth certificate. The hospital usually has no knowledge that yours is an oocyte donation pregnancy and it is up to you whether you will share this piece of information with your OB doctor.

We work with many oocyte donor agencies. You could find an agency on your own or you can choose one of the following agencies we are most familiar with:

<b>Peas in a Pod</b> 100 North Glendora Ave, Suite 103 Glendora, CA 91741	626-857-9000 Peasinapodinc.com
<b>Creative Conceptions</b> 25108 Marguerite Pkwy A-457 Mission Viejo, CA 92692	949-597-3191 creativeconceptioninc.com
<b>Fertility Connections</b> 90 Throckmorton, Suite 24 Mill Valley, CA 94941	415-383-2553 FertilityConnections.com
<b>The Donor Source</b> 24012 Calle De La Plata, Suite 370 Laguna Hills, CA 92653	877-375-8888 TheDonorSource.com
<b>Loving Donation</b> 697 Stonefield Loop, Lake Mary, FL 32746 (321) 283-0530	321-283-0530 lovingdonation.com
<b>Asian Egg Donation</b> 197 Route 18 South, Suite 3000 East Brunswick, NJ 08816	888-665-8868 asianeggdonation.com
<b>Egg Donor, Inc</b> 15821 Ventura Blvd. Suite 625 Encino, California 91436	818-385-0950 eggdonor.com

## **Oocyte Donation Guidelines**

### **Deciding about Oocyte Donation**

Please consider the following questions before finalizing your decision to proceed with the egg donation treatment:

- Why is oocyte donation a better option for you and your partner than adoption or child-free living?
- Have you considered that while the recipient (if pregnant) is outwardly fertile in appearance she is still medically infertile?
- Have you discussed using donor eggs with your family? Why or why not? What were their reactions?
- Who will you tell about your child's background and when?
- While the recipient will be the gestational but not the genetic parent to the child, her partner will be the genetic parent to the child. How does this make you feel?
- Have you determined if you will tell your child about his/her background? If so, when? If so, how will you tell your child? Perhaps share pictures and family history about your donor?
- Have you considered how you might feel if, after all the interaction and sharing with a known donor, you do not get pregnant?
- Have you and your partner discussed theoretically the number of embryos to be transferred? Are you aware that a greater number of embryos transferred results in higher rates of multiple pregnancy?
- Do you know what selective termination or selective reduction means? How do you feel about it? Do you know the risks of miscarriage from multiple pregnancies versus the risks of miscarriage from selective termination?
- Have you considered how you would feel if the child is born with a birth defect? Given that the male partner is the genetic partner, what level of responsibility would he feel in comparison with the female partner in this circumstance?
- Is there a male factor as well?
- How would you feel if the donor provided eggs for another couple?

### **How to Choose an Oocyte Donor Agency**

You may look for an oocyte donor on your own or you may use the services of a third party oocyte donor agency. Here are some common guidelines and questions:

- What is the fee schedule for the provider's services? Do you have to pay a fee up front? Is the fee refundable if you change your mind about a donor? What exactly do all the fees cover? Does the agency charge differently if you pay cash, check or credit card?
- What is the fee for the donor herself? Can she set her reimbursement herself? If she has provided eggs before has her price remained the same or gone up? If the recipient pays the donor's expenses, does the agency provide an itemized list of expenses?
- What kind of screening does the donor need to have? What is the psychological screening and who performs it, the agency or a third party? Is there an extra charge for psychological testing (i.e., MMPI)? Can you see the results of the testing? Can you have the donor tested by a third party of your own choosing?
- Does the agency facilitate a meeting between you and the donor if you wish to meet? Does the agency provide anonymous, known donors or both?
- What kinds of records and information are kept on anonymous donors, where and for how long? There may be some reason in the future to contact an anonymous donor.

- What does the agency do to ensure that a donor hasn't donated too many times before in terms of resultant offspring?
- What is the legal contract the agency requires the donor to sign?
- How long has the agency been in business under the current name or a different name? How many donors has the agency matched with recipients in a year? Out of the number of donors matched how many stimulation cycles, how many retrievals, how many pregnancies and live births have resulted?
- Does the donor agency help the uninsured donor find medical coverage?

### **Finding an Oocyte Donor on Your Own**

An egg donor can be a relative, friend, or you may want to find a donor on your own, rather than using an oocyte donor agency.

A blood-related (to the female partner) donor can be an excellent choice as long as the potential donor is not pressured into the treatment. Also consider what would happen to the family relationships if the treatment was unsuccessful. The feeling of guilt and "letting you down" by the egg donor may be profound.

Once you select a potential donor, have her email or call us to set up her initial consultation.

Your donor does not have to live locally or even in this country. It is possible to minimize the number of your donor's visits to Nova IVF. She would have to come for a 1 to 2 day visit prior to the beginning of the egg donation cycle and would have to stay for about a week during the treatment itself.

We have listed some of the factors you should consider in your search for a qualified egg donor:

#### Positive Indicators:

- Younger than 36 years of age
- History of at least one pregnancy within the last 5 years
- History of regular menstrual periods
- No history of infertility

#### Negative Indicators:

- Positive family history for inheritable psychiatric disorder
- Substance abuse
- Two or more first degree relatives with substance dependence
- Current use of psychotropic medications
- Family history of sexual or physical abuse without professional treatment for the donor
- Chaotic lifestyle
- Significant current stress
- Marital relationship instability
- History of legal difficulties
- High risk sexual practices
- Under the age of 21
- Desperate financial situation

- Objection to oocyte donation by the partner of a potential donor should disqualify such donor.

### **Questions to Ask Potential Oocyte Donors**

Please consider the following questions in making your oocyte donor selection. The choice of the questions will depend on whether the potential donor is a relative or friend, or merely a known donor.

General Questions:

- Why do you want to participate in egg donation?
- Why did you choose to be a known donor?
- What are your feelings about being available in the future for the baby?
- What are your expectations about how a child born from this treatment should be raised?
- Does it matter if the prospective parents are married?
- Does it matter if I (as the recipient) am single or a lesbian?
- What do you imagine how you will feel if the procedure does not succeed?
- Are you aware excess eggs may be fertilized and may be frozen as embryos?
- Do you expect any legal relationship with the baby?
- What are your expectations, if any, around receiving a fee for your participation?
- Are you willing to participate a second time if we desire siblings for our child, or if a pregnancy didn't result from the first transfer?
- How do you feel about our decision to give embryos to another couple or make them available for scientific research?
- Do you have any children of your own? How many do you have and what are their ages?
- Are you willing to participate in a counseling session?
- Are you aware that you will need to sign a legal agreement detailing your willingness to sacrifice all parental claim or responsibility?
- Do you have health insurance in the unlikely event of post treatment complications?
- If you have a husband/partner, how does he feel about your interest in donating eggs?
- What is your understanding of the medical procedure that will be involved to stimulate your ovaries with medication and retrieve eggs?
- Who will be your support person during the treatment? Who will give you your injections?
- Are you aware that we may have multiple pregnancies? How do you feel about this possibility?
- Are there people with whom you have shared your interest to be an egg donor? If there were any, what were their reactions?
- Why do you think you would be a good egg donor?
- What do you believe your strengths and weaknesses are?
- Do you have any ethical or religious viewpoints which might affect your decision to be an egg donor?
- Do you know anyone who has donated her eggs? Or who was a sperm donor? What was her or his experience?

- Where did you learn about this opportunity?
- How do you feel about the possibility that embryos may be frozen for a long time, perhaps for years?
- What are your feelings about selective termination or selective reduction?

#### Specific Questions When the Donor Is a Relative or a Close Friend:

It is presumed that any donor who is a relative or a close friend will have an ongoing or close relationship with the recipient couple. Consequently, the questions do not need to be as expansive as with a recruited donor.

- Is there anything significant about your relationship with your relative that contributed to your decision to donate eggs?
- What do you imagine are the concerns associated with donating eggs to a relative?
- How do you imagine your relationship will change by donating eggs?
- How does your family feel about your decision to donate eggs to a relative?
- Who will know about this decision and who will not?
- If you have decided to keep this private, how do you expect to handle an unplanned disclosure?
- If you have a husband or partner, how does he feel about the possibility of a baby born of this procedure? Will he participate in counseling if requested?
- Have you discussed with your partner the risks associated with this procedure and with the medication you must take?

#### Specific Questions for a Donor Who Is Willing To Meet With the Recipient Couple:

- Does your family have a tendency towards any particular illnesses, i.e., allergies, intestinal problem, cancer, heart disease or psychological problems? Who had one or more of these illnesses, and at what age did the onset occur?
- Are your blood relatives living, i.e., parents, siblings, grandparents, aunts and uncles? If not, how old were they when they died, and what did they die of?
- Have you or any member of your immediate family ever smoked, drank or used illegal substances? To what extent are any of these, or have any of these ever been, a problem?
- Have you ever been pregnant? What was the outcome?
- Have you ever donated eggs before? If you have, how many follicles developed? How many eggs were retrieved? How many successfully fertilized? Was there a resulting pregnancy, multiple pregnancy, and live birth(s)?
- What can you tell us about your family of origin? Who are they and what are their ages? What are their vocational and avocational interests, hobbies, talents and dispositions? What are their physical characteristics such as coloring, size, weight and height?
- Do you have any children? If yes, how old are they now? When did they learn to walk and talk? Were there and are there any significant health issues we should know about? What are their special abilities and interests? What was their birth weight and length?
- If you do not have children, why do you want to help us have a baby using your egg(s)? Have you considered the unlikely circumstance where at a later date you might be unable to conceive?
- What is your family's genealogical heritage or history? What country(s) did your ancestors come from, where did they settle and when?

- Why do you want to be a donor? What do you think you will get out of it? If you have already donated, what did you get out of it?
- If we get pregnant, will you tell your family members including your children? If so, how will you tell them, and when? Would you want your children to know that our child would share half of their genetic heritage? How will you handle their questions?
- May we see or have pictures of your family, siblings and children? If we desire, may we meet with your immediate family, including your children?
- Have you thought about how you would feel if, after all this interaction and sharing, we do not get pregnant?
- Have you thought about whether you would like any ongoing contact such as pictures, phone calls or meeting the child?
- Is your job or school situation flexible enough to do this procedure? Do you have child care available, if you have children?

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