Planning For Your Future Family

More than ever, cancer patients are surviving their disease and can look forward to the future. The ability to have children and build a family is important to cancer survivors. Loss of fertility and early menopause can be side effects of cancer treatment.

Oncofertility is a field that bridges oncology (the study of cancer) and women’s health to expand and provide good options for preserving fertility in patients facing fertility-threatening therapies.

The Oncofertility Program at UCSD is one of five designated centers participating in the NIH-funded Oncofertility Consortium.

To get started, patients and providers should contact:

Reproductive Partners-UCSD
Regional Fertility Center
La Jolla, CA
(858) 777-8780

UCSD Medical Center
Moores Cancer Center
La Jolla, CA
(858) 822-2660 or 1-(866) 708-FERT (3378)

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Exploring Your Options

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We Perform Fertility Preservation Consultations at:
UCSD Thornton Hospital
UCSD Perlman Clinic
Moores UCSD Cancer Center
Reproductive Partners-UCSD Regional Fertility Center

Resources:
Ucsandiegofertility.com/fertility-preservation.html
Cancer.ucsd.edu
Myoncofertility.org
Oncofertility.northwestern.edu
Fertilehope.org

What are Options Before Cancer Therapy?

In Vitro Fertilization and Embryo Banking
Embryo banking is the most established form of fertility preservation and is an excellent option for women who have a male partner or are interested in using donor sperm. For breast cancer patients, there are specific ovarian stimulation protocols that may be considered to reduce exposure to estrogen. Embryos are frozen for future use.

Egg Banking
In recent years, significant advances in freezing eggs for future use have occurred. Early clinical experiences suggest that egg banking may have similar success to embryo banking, but it is still too early to know that the success is as good as banking embryos.

Ovarian Tissue Banking
One ovary is removed through a surgical procedure called laparoscopy. The portion of ovary containing eggs is frozen for later use. This option is experimental but may be the best option for women who must start their cancer treatments immediately.

Fertility Sparing Surgery
For patients who will receive abdominal or pelvic irradiation, it may be possible to move the ovaries surgically out of the field of radiation. For patients with early stage gynecologic cancers, it may be able to conserve reproductive organs at the time of cancer surgery.

Additional Options
Preimplantation genetic diagnosis (PGD), ovarian suppression, ovarian shielding, psychological support and financial counseling are among other options discussed at a fertility preservation consultation.

Safety of Pregnancy After Cancer
Thus far, research on the safety of pregnancy after cancer is reassuring.

What are Options After Cancer Therapy?

After cancer therapy, survivors who desire to have children may wish to have a consultation with a reproductive endocrinologist about fertility potential.

Fertility Treatment and Assisted Reproduction
For women who are subfertile after cancer therapy, traditional assisted reproductive technologies may be appropriate. Embryos and eggs that were banked before cancer therapy may be used to achieve pregnancy.

Third Party Reproduction: Egg Donation
For cancer survivors who become menopausal with cancer treatment, egg donation is a highly effective option for becoming pregnant.

Third Party Reproduction: Gestational Surrogacy
A gestational surrogate is a woman who will carry a pregnancy for intended parents. Because some women are unable to carry a pregnancy after cancer therapy, having a gestational surrogate carry their pregnancy may be an option for these cancer survivors.

Adoption

Oncofertility Clinical Trials
The Oncofertility Program at UCSD-Reproductive Partners is actively engaged in research to address issues of fertility in cancer survivors.
- National Fertility Preservation Registry
- Oncofertility Consortium Ovarian Tissue Cryopreservation Study
- POISE and ORACLE Studies for predictors of fertility and ovarian function in female cancer survivors
- Adolescent and Young Adult (AYA) cancer survivor studies

For more information, please call our nurse coordinator at: (858) 822-2660 or 1-(866) 708-FERT (3378)