



# Aevitas

Fertility Clinic • Cape Town

## *Egg Freezing – Frequently Asked Questions*



*Become your very own egg donor*

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## Why do women consider freezing their eggs?

Women are born with their full supply of eggs, which is approximately 1 – 2 million at birth. As women age their egg count and quality (genetic normality) decrease and therefore the chances of a successful pregnancy also decrease. Women consider freezing their eggs for any condition/circumstance that might affect their fertility and family planning. By preserving younger eggs now, you increase your chances of starting a family later in life, using your own eggs.

*Reasons women freeze their eggs could include:*

- Medical conditions and treatment that could affect fertility, for example chemotherapy.
- Not having found the right partner with whom to start a family.
- Being in a relationship, but not ready to start a family.
- Not the right time in life, to start a family e.g. seeking financial stability-, pursuing a career prior to starting a family.

## At what age is it best to freeze eggs?

We encourage women to freeze their eggs before they turn 35, as egg quality decreases rapidly mid 30's. This being said, you are the youngest today that you will ever be. The older you are when you freeze your eggs, the more eggs you need to freeze in order to increase your chances of a successful pregnancy.

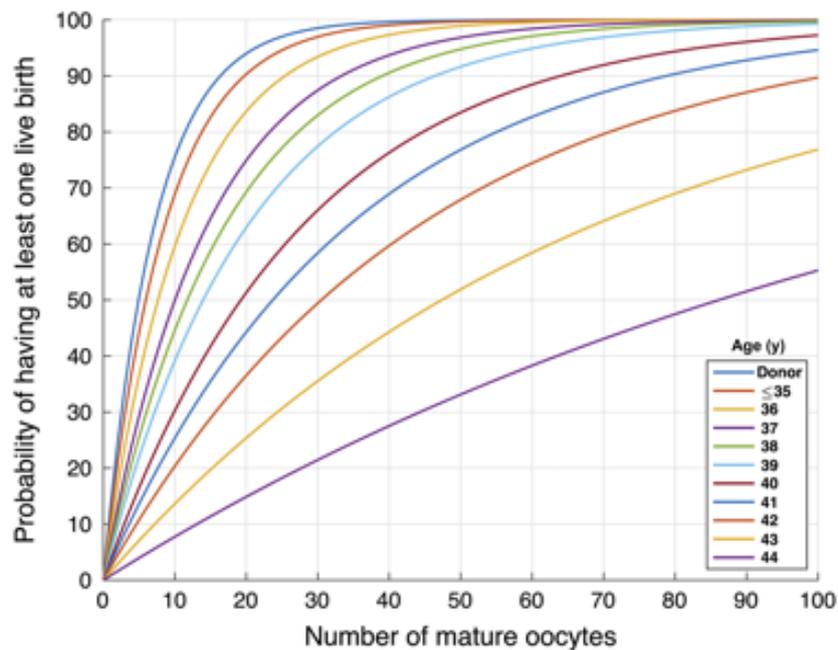
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## What is the ideal number of eggs to freeze?

The below graph illustrates the live birth predictions by age and number of mature eggs retrieved.

**Figure 1** Live birth predictions by age and number of mature oocytes retrieved. Each curve shows the percent likelihood ...



Human Reproduction, Volume 32, Issue 4, April 2017, Pages 853–859, <https://doi.org/10.1093/humrep/dex008>  
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For example: At the age of 37, you need to freeze 24 eggs for an 80% likelihood of one live birth. However, if you freeze at the age of 34, 12 eggs will give you the same likelihood.

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## Benefits of egg freezing at Aevitas Fertility Clinic?

Aevitas Fertility Clinic is FDA approved for oocyte retrieval, freezing and distribution. Our embryologists have been trained by the best in the world to refine our laboratory techniques, as evident by our outstanding success rates. As a leader in the field of fertility, Aevitas acts as a training unit for scientists and Reproductive Fellows (gynaecologists) in the field of Assisted Reproductive Technology (ART).

Our clinic is situated 10km's from Cape Town city centre – a bucket list holiday destination! Many women combine egg freezing with a unique holiday destination. Through trusted partners, we can assist with interpreting-, transport and accommodation services, during your stay (see 'Can the clinic assist in accommodation/transport options?' for more information).

## What is the process of egg freezing?

### 1. Consultation & evaluation

#### Local patients

When you visit Aevitas Fertility Clinic for a consultation with one of our fertility specialists, your consultation will include: a medical history, physical examination and pelvic ultra-sound examination. During this consultation, the fertility specialist will also explain the procedure of egg freezing to you and answer any questions you may have. As part of the evaluation, blood tests may be performed to test AMH levels (an indicator of ovarian reserve) and to screen for infectious disease.

#### Traveling patients

**Step 1:** Please have the following blood tests performed at your local pathology laboratory:

- HIV
- Hepatitis B and -C
- RPR / vDRL (Syphilis)
- AMH
- Chlamydia Trachomatis IgG / Neisseria Gonorrhoeae IgG

**Step 2:** Complete the 'Egg freezing – patient form'.

Submit the form to [market.research@aevidas.co.za](mailto:market.research@aevidas.co.za) and request a telephone/Skype consultation with [an Aevitas' fertility specialist of your choice.](#)

**Step 3:** Telephonic/Skype consultation with an Aevitas fertility specialist.

**Step 4:** Plan your trip

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### **Step 5:** Regulate your cycle

We usually recommend that you use birth control pills, prior to your visit to our clinic, in order to control the timing of the cycle. This option will be discussed during your in-person or Skype/telephone consultation with the fertility specialist. A combination pill containing the hormones oestrogen and progesterone is usually prescribed for this purpose.

Day 1 of your period is the first day of your menstrual cycle. The prescribed birth control pill is normally started on that day. One pill is taken each day at the same time. The last row of pills in the packet is the hormone-free pill (placebo), which will not be taken. You will need to use the pill for at least 10 to 15 days before stimulation is started. When you arrive in Cape Town, you will have a follow-up consultation with an Aevitas fertility specialist.

## 2. Stimulation

You will receive your stimulation plan, with stimulation medication (usually in the form of hormone injections taken for approximately 10 days). You will be shown how to administer the injections.

## 3. Retrieval & egg freezing

Retrieval will happen around day 14 of your cycle. During the days leading up to egg retrieval, you will have an average of three follow-up scan appointments at Aevitas.

On the day of retrieval, you will come to the clinic having fasted for 8 hours. The egg retrieval process itself takes about 10mins and is performed under deep sedation in our state-of-the-art operating room, within our clinic. Through ultrasound guidance, the doctor uses a needle to reach the ovarian follicle containing the eggs. A suction device at the end of the needle removes the eggs from the follicles.

Eggs are stored in liquid nitrogen tanks and can be stored indefinitely. Gas mixtures, temperatures and liquid nitrogen levels are checked daily and emergency plans are in place in the case of equipment failures or other emergencies (such as power failures). This way we ensure that your eggs are safe!

## Anything I should / should not do when I freeze my eggs?

*Try maintaining a healthy lifestyle:*

- Eat a balanced diet which includes fresh fruit and vegetables, rather than opting for packaged and processed foods.
- If you are a smoker, try and refrain from smoking 3 months prior to retrieval.
- Limit your caffeine and alcohol intake to an average of 1 – 2 units/day.
- Try and get 7 – 8 hours of sleep a night.
- You may supplement your diet with Vitamin C and Omega 3. Inform your fertility specialist if you are taking any other medication or supplements.
- You might feel discomfort during hormone stimulation and a few days after retrieval, therefore adapt your exercise routine accordingly.

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## What are the side effects and potential risks associated with egg freezing?

You can expect to feel bloated due to the hormone medication and some women experience emotional side effects similar to Pre-Menstrual Tension.

There is risk of ovarian hyperstimulation syndrome (OHSS), if the ovaries are overly responsive to the hormones. This is reported in a small percentage (< 1%) of cycles and is very rare during egg freezing cycles.

In case of any discomfort or complications our patients have a 24hour direct line to our nursing staff.

## How long should travelling patients stay in Cape Town for, when undergoing egg freezing?

In total you will need to be in Cape Town for a minimum of 17 days. 12 days prior to retrieval and 5 days after retrieval.

## Can the clinic assist in accommodation/transport options?

The following options come highly recommended; however, Aevitas Fertility Clinic is not affiliated with any of the accommodation options:

### **Airbnb V&A Waterfront apartment**

[Prime Waterfront sunny designer garden apartment. A mere 10km drive to Aevitas Fertility Clinic.](#)

### **Affordable Accommodation**

If you are looking for affordable accommodation in Cape Town, which ranges from private self-catering apartments, garden flats, studios and small houses. Kim can be of assistance with accommodation, transport, transfers, caregiving and support.

Phone: +27 72 265 9900, E-mail: [graymoon@telkomsa.net](mailto:graymoon@telkomsa.net)

### **Rosedale Guest Suite**

For a Self-Catering Unit in Pinelands contact Ken and Maureen

Phone: +27 21 531 3752 / +27 73 607 5166, E-mail: [Ken.gillham@telkomsa.net](mailto:Ken.gillham@telkomsa.net)

Website: [www.rosedaleguestsuite.co.za](http://www.rosedaleguestsuite.co.za)

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### **5th Avenue Lodge**

5th Avenue Lodge is situated in Rondebosch.

Phone: +27 21 696 8514, E-mail: [info@5thavenuelodge.co.za](mailto:info@5thavenuelodge.co.za)

Website: [www.5thavenuelodge.co.za](http://www.5thavenuelodge.co.za)

### **Surgical Bliss**

Packages according to your needs and budget.

Phone: +27 82 857 4414

E-mail: [denise@surgicalbliss.com](mailto:denise@surgicalbliss.com)

Website: [www.surgicalbliss.com](http://www.surgicalbliss.com)

## What are the approximate costs of egg freezing?

Approximate cost (2019) is around R 32 000 for egg freezing and storage up to five years (this excludes initial consultation and skype/telephone consultation fees, blood tests and medication). As costs are subject to change, please contact [accounts@aevitas.co.za](mailto:accounts@aevitas.co.za) for the most current cost estimates.

## What happens after I have frozen my eggs?

Once you are ready, you can return to our clinic to use your eggs. Your eggs will be thawed and fertilised through an IVF procedure. The IVF procedure can be performed by using your partner's sperm or donor sperm.

Alternatively, your eggs can be shipped to a clinic of your choice. Please note, shipping cost will be at your own cost.

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