



West Texas Reproductive Center

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What Does Egg Donation Involve?

The first step is to complete the ovum donor personal history form and return it with a picture of yourself. Women who are accepted will then proceed with blood work, an ultrasound, psychological testing, and a complete physical examination. Once these tests are successfully completed the donor proceeds to the matching phase. Once matched with a recipient couple education on the administration of “fertility medication” will begin.

Administration of “fertility medication”

Fertility medications are used to help a woman’s ovaries produce from 10-30 eggs. Some of the fertility medication is a purified form of the natural hormones your body uses to regulate the production of eggs each month. Since experience tells us that women who are taking fertility medication may have a tendency to ovulate their eggs away before the doctor can harvest them for the *In Vitro* process, a drug called Lupron is used to prevent premature ovulation. Fertility drugs are inactivated by the digestive system and must be given by injection. Most egg donors take their shots at home and find that they are not particularly uncomfortable. In most cases these drugs are given over the course of three to five weeks. You will have scheduled follow up visits for blood tests and ultrasound. This is to follow the effects of the fertility medications on the egg production.

The “egg harvest” procedure

A minor outpatient surgical procedure is performed to remove eggs from the ovaries for the *In Vitro* process. To perform an “egg harvest” the doctor uses the picture made by ultrasound machine to guide a very special needle through your vagina and into the ovaries. Eggs are removed one at a time during the course of five to ten minutes. The comfort and safety of our egg donors are our prime concern. To make sure you feel no pain, you will be given some form of anesthesia. Once the anesthesia has worn off, you will be ready to go home within an hour or two.

The egg harvest procedure is usually performed in the early morning. In many cases donors are completely back to normal by the afternoon. Most women tell us that they are a little sore for one or two days after the procedure, but otherwise feel well.

Once the eggs are harvested, they are taken into the *In Vitro* fertilization laboratory. There they are cleaned, inspected, and fertilized with sperm from the recipient’s husband. Several days later the fertilized eggs are placed into the uterus of the mother to begin a pregnancy.