

Beginnings Embryo Donor – General Information

Thank you for your inquiry with Beginnings!

We are very excited about the Embryo Donation Program and are happily taking new donors and recipients. As you may know, Beginnings is the only provider of open embryo donation services in Canada. Donors have the ability to choose the recipient family and maintain contact to a mutually agreeable level.

Beginnings services are altruistic with no payment or other compensation for use of the embryos. Our work is guided by the belief in the best interests of the child – that the psychosocial needs of children born from assisted reproductive technologies must be considered, and that all parties must be prepared for the lifelong complexities associated with their origins. **Please note:** Beginnings is unable to assist with storage fees. Potential Donors must keep their storage fees current with their clinic until the donation occurs. Embryos remain in storage at your clinic until the donation plan is completed as Beginnings is not a fertility clinic and does not have a storage facility.

We will quickly go through the steps for becoming a Recipient through Beginnings. **If you decide that you would like to pursue Embryo Donation through Beginnings please feel free to email our program staff:** Mary Howlett-Nero (mary.howlett-nero@beginnings.ca), Julia Milmine (julia.milmine@beginnings.ca) and/or Stephanie Parker (stephanie.parker@beginnings.ca), for registration information or any additional questions that you may have.

The process includes:

- ❖ Completion of registration paperwork, including Donor Family information and information on Donor's children (*This paperwork can be provided to you via Mary or Julia)
- ❖ Provision of embryology report. If you do not have a copy of the embryology report, Beginnings is happy to request one on your behalf from your fertility clinic where the embryos are stored.
- ❖ Consultation with Beginnings' staff. This is completed via Zoom or a similar platform and usually takes between 1-1.5 hours
- ❖ Completion of an assessment to ensure that all implications of the donation are understood and to discuss recipient preferences.
- ❖ Recipient profile presentation and selection process
- ❖ Meeting arranged with Recipient(s) with full information disclosure. These meetings occur virtually and are facilitated by Beginnings staff.
- ❖ Notification to the fertility clinic where embryos are stored of the embryo donation plan
- ❖ Referral for legal agreement for embryo release to Recipient(s)

After these steps are completed and the embryos are legally transferred to the Recipients, Donor responsibility for embryos ceases. The Recipient(s) will attend their fertility clinic, comply with

regulations and medical advice, and then complete the embryo transfer procedure. The Donor(s) will be informed of outcomes and ongoing contact is maintained based on the wishes of both parties. Beginnings offers follow up support should the Donors and/or Recipients request it.

Please note: Beginnings does require that you have a minimum of two embryos in order to be in our program. This is due to the fact that most Recipients would like at least two chances to attain a successful pregnancy or to have multiple children that are genetic siblings to one another. Unfortunately, we have found that matching a single embryo is often very difficult and may take a substantial amount of time.

You will find more information about our Embryo Donation Program at www.beginnings.ca. The FAQ section has a lot of information. <https://www.beginnings.ca/frequently-asked-questions/>

Thank you for your interest.