Anonymous donation of sperm and eggs

This information leaflet provides a brief overview of sperm or egg donation.

Do you have any further questions or need more information? The contact persons at Leuven university fertility centre will be pleased to explain.

Leuven university fertility centre
UZ Leuven campus Gasthuisberg
Herestraat 49
3000 Leuven
tel. +32 (0)16 34 36 24
fax +32 (0)16 34 36 07
www.uzleuven.be/lufc

Contact:
X Egg donation: Els Bakelants tel. +32 (0)16 34 36 23
X Sperm donation: Elly Vergison tel. +32 (0)16 34 44 76 or +32 (0)16 34 13 07

Published by:
UZ Leuven
Herestraat 49
3000 Leuven
tel. 016 34 49 00
www.uzleuven.be

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If you have any comments or suggestions about this leaflet please send these to communicatie@uzleuven.be.
**WHY IS DONATION NECESSARY?**

You may know a couple among your friends or family who have found it difficult to have children. If so, you will know that their unrealised desire to have a child can often be hugely important and painful for them. Sometimes a woman can still become pregnant using donated sperm or a donated egg. This can also be a solution for couples who are at increased risk of having children with a genetic abnormality.

At present, however, there is a shortage of donors. The Leuven university fertility centre is therefore looking for donors who are willing to donate their sperm or eggs.

**WHO CAN BE AN DONOR AND HOW DOES DONATION WORK?**

Donation of sperm or eggs takes place on a voluntary basis. Sperm donors must be aged between 21 and 45 and egg donors must be aged between 21 and 37. If you wish to become a donor, first your general health will be checked and you will have a blood test for infectious diseases and inherited disorders that might be transmitted through donation. Sperm donors are also examined by an andrologist, who is a specialist in male fertility. After these medical tests, sperm and egg donors will talk with the fertility consultant about the psychological aspects of sperm or egg donation.

**WHAT ARE THE RISKS?**

Sperm donation does not entail any risks. Egg donors must have a hormone treatment and undergo egg cell aspiration (by needle). As a result there are a limited number of risks associated with egg donation, which are similar to the risks of undergoing IVF treatment (in-vitro fertilisation). To keep these risks to a minimum, the egg donor is carefully monitored during treatment, with blood tests and ultrasound scans. The egg donor needs to visit the hospital regularly, which may have an impact on daily routines. We therefore always seek to work with a gynaecologist close to the egg donor’s own home or workplace.

**WHAT HAPPENS AFTER DONATION?**

Sperm and egg donation are unconditional and irrevocable. This means that the donor gives up all his/her rights over the donated sperm or eggs and that the donor has no rights whatsoever over the children who are conceived with the donated sperm or eggs.

**ARE SPERM AND EGG DONATION ANONYMOUS?**

In Belgium the anonymity of donors and recipients of sperm and eggs is strictly guaranteed. The donor gives an undertaking never to trace the identity of the recipient.

**IS THERE A FINANCIAL REMUNERATION?**

A small payment is given to sperm donors for each usable sample. In the case of egg donation, a payment is made to allow the egg donor to pay for her own preparatory investigations, hormone treatment and egg cell aspiration and a small amount is also included to cover expenses.