



## **Sperm Freezing**

In addition to tests performed measuring sperm quality, the Andrology Laboratory at Abbott Northwestern Hospital can cryopreserve (freeze) samples for individuals seeking to store their samples for future use.

## **Reasons for Freezing**

There are several circumstances in which a patient may want to store semen. Some of these situations include:

- prior to radiation or chemotherapy,
- prior to a vasectomy,
- prior to specific surgery which may carry a risk of impairing reproductive function,
- prior to in vitro fertilization (IVF) or gamete intrafallopian tubal transfer (GIFT),
- prior to shipping the semen to another location.

## **Cost**

The laboratory operates both a short-term storage (STS) and a long-term storage (LTS) program for patients. Vials may be stored for 60 days at no charge following the freezing process. After that time, quarterly storage fees will apply.

## **Limitations**

Sperm are frozen slowly by adding a "cryoprotectant" solution to the sample, allowing the sperm to survive during the freezing and thawing process. The semen is divided into aliquots and stored in small vials. Cryopreserved semen is stored under liquid nitrogen (-197 °C). Freezing generally kills 25 to 50 percent of the sperm. Therefore, even a "good freeze" results in lower effective number of motile sperm in the sample after it is thawed. Ideally, samples should be "test-frozen" first by thawing at least one vial to make sure that your sample freezes well. This is particularly important if you plan to put your samples into long term storage.

## **Destruction of Samples**

Samples are stored until used, shipped elsewhere, or destroyed. Samples will be destroyed per a patient's written request or failure of patient to pay their storage fees (which will also be turned over to collections). It is your responsibility to promptly advise us of any changes in your home and work phone numbers and addresses. Failure to provide notification may result in sample destruction if we cannot find a way to reach you.

To request to have your samples destroyed and billing stopped, you will need to complete a sperm disposition form and either sign it in the presence of our staff or have it witnessed by a notary public. To request a sperm disposition form, give us a call at (612) 863-4115 or print a copy of the **Sperm Discard Authorization (ANF04A)** and mail it to:

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