

Options to Assist with Fertility



Fertility challenges affect approximately 15% of couples in the United States, leading to the use of assisted reproductive technologies (ART) and various medical therapies to help conceive a child. In recent years, medical advances and therapies have been developed to assist both opposite and same-sex partners experiencing reproductive obstacles. A growing number of LGBTQ partners are utilizing reproductive assistance, such as sperm and egg freezing, insemination and in vitro fertilization. If you are experiencing reproductive challenges, you are not alone. There are resources to help.

Frozen Eggs Can Be Saved for Future Use

Egg freezing (in medical terms, “oocyte cryopreservation”) allows women to preserve their eggs, which has become increasingly popular in recent years. This is a great option for couples or women who want to delay childbearing. Egg freezing involves the stimulation of the ovaries to produce multiple eggs, which are then extracted and frozen. The eggs can be thawed and fertilized via in vitro fertilization (IVF).

IVF Is the Most Effective Form of ART

If you’re considering IVF, talk with your primary care physician. IVF has become a widely accepted and successful method of fertility treatment. It is the most effective form of ART, according to the American Society of Reproductive Medicine (ASRM).

Preimplantation Genetic Testing Helps to Boost IVF

Preimplantation genetic testing (PGT) increases the success rates of

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SAVE THE DATES!

Cook County 2023 Employee Health Fairs will take place June 6-8 and 13-15. This year’s theme is mental, emotional and social well-being for your Best Health, Best Self!

Let the fun begin!

We’re kicking things off this month with **“Password for a Prize”**

Hidden in this Wellness Wednesday health sheet, you will find a Health Fairs password. Once you locate the password, click on it and you can send an email to enter to win. The first three respondents will receive a small prize.

If you are a lucky winner and get an official winner confirmation email, there is one last step! In order to claim your prize, you will need to attend one of the on-site or virtual health fairs. Each winner can take away one prize, with a total of three prizes awarded each week.

**Find that
“Password for a Prize”
Good luck!**

IVF cycles and identifies the risk of miscarriage or genetic disorders in offspring.

Intrauterine Insemination Is a Low-Cost, Low-Risk Option

Intrauterine insemination (IUI) is less invasive and less expensive than IVF and has a higher success rate than timed intercourse when the male partner has a low sperm count. IUI is a fertility treatment that places washed sperm directly into the uterus during ovulation. Washing sperm is a process of isolating the healthy, swimming sperm from excess fluids in the semen. According to the ASRM, the success rate of IUI is approximately 8%-17% per cycle.



Donor Eggs Can Result in Healthy Pregnancies and Babies

Depending on your family planning process, you may also choose to receive eggs from a donor. Donor eggs are often used in cases where a female partner has a low ovarian reserve or a history of failed IVF cycles. Donor eggs can be fertilized with the sperm of the male partner/donor using IVF, and the resulting embryos can be transferred to the intended female partner's uterus or a gestational carrier. Donor eggs have been shown to have high success rates and can result in healthy pregnancies and healthy babies.

If you'd like to learn more about where to go to receive a diagnosis and/or treatment, reach out to your Primary Care Physician (PCP). If you do not have a PCP, you may call the Customer Service number on your BCBSIL member ID card or log on to Blue Access for MembersSM (BAMSM) bcbsil.com and use the Provider Finder. This fast, easy-to-use tool improves members' experience when searching for in-network healthcare providers.

It Takes a Village

Reproductive obstacles can be a challenging experience that can take a toll on emotional and mental well-being. The emotional and mental challenges can impact each person differently based on several factors. Be on the watch for these emotional or mental red flags that might require additional support from friends, family or a trusted professional:

- ◆ Feelings of stress and anxiety from constant disappointment or failed treatments
- ◆ Feelings of depression, loss, failure or hopelessness
- ◆ Feelings of grief about an inability to conceive or inability to share such a private issue
- ◆ Strain on relationships, including couples, parents of couples, friends
- ◆ Social isolation, embarrassment or discomfort discussing infertility
- ◆ Feelings of low self-esteem or self-worth, guilt or blame

Infertility can be a challenging experience, yet medical advances and therapies have provided hope for many. Recognize the health impact of infertility beyond the physical and seek support as needed. Counseling, support groups, and the **EAP** are potential resources to help cope with the emotional and mental challenges of infertility. **PASSWORD: My Health Connections**

