

Frozen Embryo Transfer Your Options

You Currently have _____ Embryos frozen at WFC

The embryos were frozen on Day _____

You have embryos frozen at the Westmead Fertility Centre (WFC) and you are now ready to have them thawed and transferred.

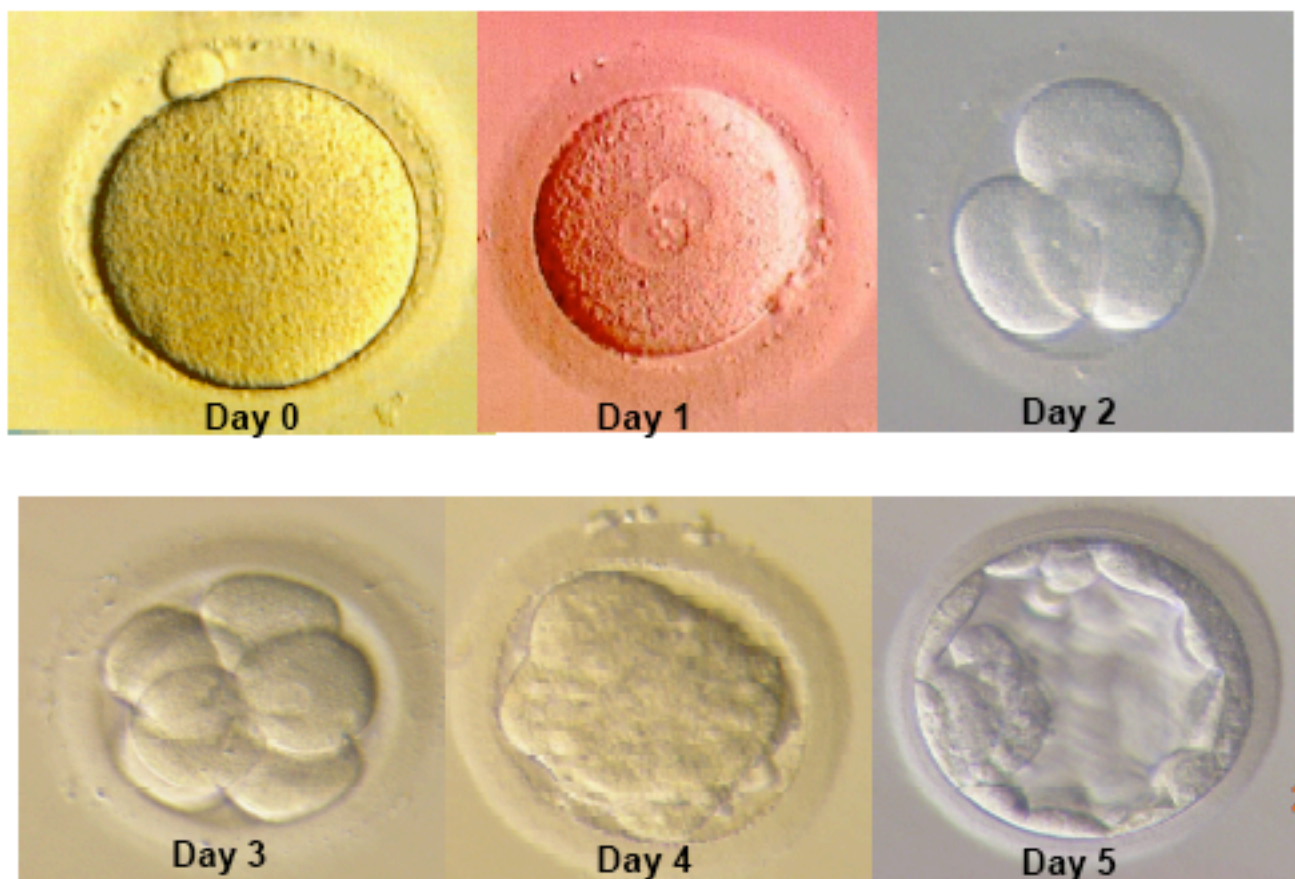
At this time we want you to consider the different options available to you and what chances of pregnancy you have depending on the option you choose.

We would like you to read this information leaflet carefully and think through your options and decide what 'Thaw Plan' is best for you.

Background

When you have your IVF/ICSI treatment we aim to collect a number of eggs and fertilise them using sperm. The day we mix eggs and sperm we call Day 0 (see pictures below). The day after (Day 1), many of the eggs will be fertilised and we can see two faint circles inside the fertilised egg. These structures are called ProNuclei (PN) and there is one from the mother and one from the father, we call this a 2PN. The embryo has only one cell at this stage and it will now start dividing or cleaving. One cell will cleave into two cells and then four cells and so on. On Day 2 most embryos will be two or four cells and on Day 3 the embryo should have six to eight cells. After Day 3 the cells in the embryo will start dividing very quickly and on Day 5 the embryo will have more than 200 cells and be what we call a Blastocyst.

At WFC we successfully freeze embryos on Day 1, Day 2, Day 3 and Day 5. The number of embryos you have frozen and what Day they were frozen is stated on the front page of this leaflet.



Choosing a Thaw Plan

At the time you make your payment, you will be asked to choose a plan for thawing your embryos. There are 3 to choose from

Conservative Thaw Plan **Pregnancy Rate 18%***

We initially only thaw 1 or 2 embryos, depending on how many you want replaced. The thawed embryo(s) are then checked for survival and more embryos are thawed out singularly if necessary.

Eligibility	all patients may choose this option
Risk level	low
Positives	may allow you more FET cycles in the future
Negatives	does not allow replacement of embryo(s) which have demonstrated they're growing well

Liberal Thaw Plan 1 – Overnight Culture **Pregnancy Rate 38%***

We thaw embryos until we have 2 or 3 intact embryos. These are then cultured overnight and the best embryo(s) can be selected for transfer the following day. Please note, you will be informed if none of the embryos undergo cleavage and will at that time be given the choice of whether you wish to proceed and have the embryos replaced.

Eligibility	patients must have ≥ 2 stored embryos
Risk level	medium
Positives	allows replacement of embryo(s) which have demonstrated they're growing well
Negatives	thawing may not result in 2 or 3 survived embryos embryos may not develop to cleavage stage you may use all your stored embryos in one thaw

Liberal Thaw Plan 2 – Blastocyst Culture **Pregnancy Rate 60%***

We thaw embryos until we have 4 intact embryos (this often means thawing more than 4). These embryos will then be cultured until Day 5 when we will choose the best blastocyst(s) for transfer.

Eligibility	patients must have ≥ 4 stored embryos
Risk level	high
Positives	allows replacement of embryo(s) which have demonstrated continued good growth over time
Negatives	thawing may not result in 4 survived embryos <i>(in this case revert to Liberal Thaw Plan 1)</i> embryos may not develop to blastocyst stage <i>(in this case revert to Liberal Thaw Plan 1)</i> you may use all your stored embryos in one thaw

Risks

Pregnancy from frozen thawed embryos depends on the initial embryo survival as well as their ability to grow and develop.

Embryo Survival after thawing: The process of cooling the embryos at the time of freezing and warming them at the thawing can be very stressful for the cells. An embryo which originally had 4 cells might only have 2 or 3 intact cells after thawing.

We consider an embryo with 50% or more of its cells intact as 'survived'. At WFC, 65% of embryos that we thaw survive.

However, sometimes none of a patients stored embryos survive. This happens for one in five couples that return for an FET cycle.

If none of your embryos survive the embryologist will call you, giving you an opportunity to ask questions. Also remember that WFC offers a free counselling service if you feel that you need support during your FET cycle.

Embryo Growth after thawing: Sometimes all the cells in an embryo are intact but they have lost their ability to cleave and grow.

The only way to monitor if the embryo is still able to cleave and develop properly after thawing, is to culture it in the laboratory over night or for a few days before it is placed into your uterus. The down side of this, is that more embryos are thawed than you will actually have replaced.

The chance of pregnancy stated for each of the thaw plan options presented is based on WFC success rates for all patients having FET from when we started offering Thaw Plans in September 2009 until July 2010*.

ONE or TWO embryos for Embryo Transfer?

We also like you to consider how many embryos you would want to have replaced. This will decide how many embryos we will thaw regardless of what Thaw Plan you choose.