



# Fertility Options In Newfoundland Labrador

## Who May Benefit from Fertility Services?

- Individuals under the age of 35 whom despite having regular, unprotected sex\* for 1 year, are not pregnant.
- Individuals aged 35 or older whom despite having regular, unprotected sex\* for 6 months, are not pregnant.
- A single individual, or an individual in a same sex relationship, who is planning on using an either known\*\* or unknown sperm donor, or a surrogate volunteer\*\*, to achieve pregnancy.
- An individual who has been diagnosed with cancer and would like to harvest their eggs or sperm and freeze them before they begin therapy.

\*It is recommended that you have sex once every other day, starting 10 days after the first day of a menstrual period, and continuing until the next period begins. Repeat this process until you are successful or until you have been advised otherwise by the fertility clinic. It is not advisable to have sex more often than that because it may result in a lower sperm count.

\*\*Some individuals in this category may decide to use sperm or eggs donated by a known donor. In this case, you may decide to try and get pregnant on your own without the use of a clinic. If so, it will be necessary to seek legal advice and have a contract drawn up before you start trying. It is also advisable for the donor to have STI testing performed. While these things are being done, track the ovulation cycle and use ovulation predictor kits available from the pharmacy to maximize your chance on each cycle.

## Where to Get Help:

Newfoundland and Labrador Fertility Services is a division of Eastern Health, and the only fertility clinic servicing this province. They are located at Suite 103, 35 Major's Path, St. John's NL. T: 709-752-3651  
F: 709-777-7455

They are regulated under the 3<sup>rd</sup> Party Reproduction Act AHRA. To become a client at this clinic, a referral from your family doctor or OBGYN is necessary. The waiting period to get an appointment is generally 6-9 months. Although, if you are 35 years or older, they will try to accommodate you sooner.

## **What Services Are Available?**

Every new client will be offered a complete fertility workup. This is a series of blood tests, ultrasounds and perhaps some other diagnostic tests that will accurately evaluate your fertility and your cycle. Most of this workup is covered by your provincial health insurance. This is useful even for individuals who are only using the clinic for access to sperm because it increases the likelihood that insemination will be performed on the correct day.

Depending on the cause for your fertility issue, one or more of the following treatments or technologies may be recommended:

### **Ovulation Induction**

There are a variety of medications that may be prescribed to you to help promote ovulation. Depending on your healthcare coverage, some or all of the costs of the drugs may be covered.

### **Intrauterine Insemination (IUI)**

Commonly used for unexplained infertility, mild to moderate sperm abnormalities, abnormal cervical mucus, or when an unknown donor has been chosen. A sperm sample (partner or donor) is “washed” to remove abnormal or dead sperm and then placed in the uterus using a fine catheter.

Newfoundland and Labrador Fertility Services do not recruit unknown sperm donors from this province. Instead, sperm will be shipped here from one of Canada’s top 3 sperm banks: Repromed, Outreach Health Services or CAN-AM Cryoservices. For those who wish to start looking for donor sperm, catalogues may be found on each centre’s website.

The cost of the IUI procedure is covered by your provincial health insurance, excluding the price of the sperm (check each catalogue as prices vary) and shipping costs (average \$150.00) but may be less when the cost is shared among clients shipping at the same time.

### **Tubal Surgery**

For individuals experiencing infertility due to damaged fallopian tubes, often caused by a previous infection, scar tissue or sterilization; laparoscopic surgery may be successful in opening up the tube. For severely damaged tubes, IVF is recommended.

### **In-vitro Fertilization (IVF)**

IVF is used in all forms of persistent infertility. This technology takes about 6 weeks and includes ovulation induction, egg retrieval, insemination and fertilization of eggs in the embryology laboratory, and embryo transfer 2-5 days later.

At the Newfoundland and Labrador Fertility Services clinic, the first 5 weeks of treatment is done here.

The 6<sup>th</sup> week, however, requires travelling to other provinces to complete the transfer.

The cost of IVF averages around usually between \$12,250 and \$77,750 per round and is not covered by the provincial health insurance. Additional costs may be incurred for travel and lodging during the final week. Also, if donor eggs or sperm are required, payment for each will be necessary.

### **Taking Care of Your Mental Health:**

Wanting to have a baby is a difficult process to go through due to the lack of control, financial investment and waiting periods. It is important that you (and your partner, if one is involved) take care of your mental health. Meeting with a counselor to discuss fears, anxieties, communication skills and financial concerns can help. Patient support groups are available, such as Infertility Awareness Association of Canada Inc. or Infertility Network. For more information, refer to the Serono Canada website [www.emdserono.ca](http://www.emdserono.ca).

## **Planned Parenthood Sexual Health Questions? We Have Answers!**

### **Location:**

47 St. Clare Avenue, St. John's, NL, A1C 2J9

### **Hours:**

Monday: 9am - 4:30pm

Tuesday: 9am - 4:30pm

Wednesday: 9am - 4:30pm

Thursday: 12pm – 6:00pm

Friday: 9am - 4:30pm

### **Phone:**

579-1009

Toll free 1-877-NO MYTHS

(1-877-666-9847)

### **Website:**

[www.plannedparenthoodnlshc.com](http://www.plannedparenthoodnlshc.com)

### **Email:**

[pp.nlshc@gmail.com](mailto:pp.nlshc@gmail.com)

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