

Your emotional journey guide

Using donor eggs or donor sperm

Donor treatment involves a complex emotional journey. This guide helps you understand common feelings at each stage, provides coping strategies, and identifies when to seek additional support.

Remember: Every person's experience is unique. These feelings are common, but you may experience some, all, or different emotions entirely. All responses are valid.

INITIAL CONSIDERATION

Feelings you might experience:

- Overwhelm at the complexity of decisions
- Grief about genetic connection or fertility challenges
- Hope and excitement about building your family
- Anxiety about making the "right" choice
- Uncertainty about donor selection

Coping strategies:

- Schedule counselling sessions early - don't wait until you're struggling
- Write down your feelings in a journal
- Give yourself permission to take time with decisions
- Talk openly with your partner about priorities and concerns
- Connect with others who've been through donor treatment

TREATMENT PREPARATION

Feelings you might experience:

- Overwhelm at the complexity of decisions
- Grief about genetic connection or fertility challenges
- Hope and excitement about building your family
- Anxiety about making the "right" choice
- Uncertainty about donor selection

Coping strategies:

- Create a practical plan for managing work commitments
- Build a support network before you need it
- Practice stress-reduction techniques (meditation, gentle exercise)
- Prepare your partner/support person for how they can help
- Set boundaries with family and friends about what you will/won't share

DURING TREATMENT CYCLES

Feelings you might experience:

- Intense emotional fluctuations ("roller coaster")
- Loss of control over your life and schedule
- Hyper-focus on symptoms and bodily sensations
- Difficulty concentrating on other aspects of life
- Tension in relationships due to stress

Coping strategies:

- Acknowledge you're in a demanding situation - this is hard
- Maintain some "normal" activities that bring you joy
- Limit exposure to pregnancy announcements if they're triggering
- Communicate clearly with your partner about needs
- Be gentle with yourself about emotional reactions



THE TWO WEEK WAIT

Feelings you might experience:

- Extreme anxiety about outcomes
- Obsessive symptom monitoring
- Oscillating between hope and despair
- Time feeling like it's moving impossibly slowly
- Difficulty focusing on anything else

Coping strategies:

- Plan distracting activities in advance
- Avoid early pregnancy tests if they increase anxiety
- Use mindfulness techniques to stay present
- Lean on your support network
- Limit online searching about symptoms

PROCESSING OUTCOMES

Feelings you might experience:

- If successful: Joy mixed with anxiety, cautious hope, fear of loss
- If unsuccessful: Profound grief, anger, questioning decisions
- Fatigue from the emotional intensity
- Uncertainty about next steps
- Need to process and make new decisions

Coping strategies:

- Allow yourself to feel whatever comes - there's no "right" way to react
- Take time before making major decisions about next steps
- Be specific about what support you need from others
- If successful: Seek support for pregnancy anxiety after fertility treatment
- If unsuccessful: Give yourself permission to grieve before planning next steps

QUICK REFERENCE: SELF-CARE ESSENTIALS

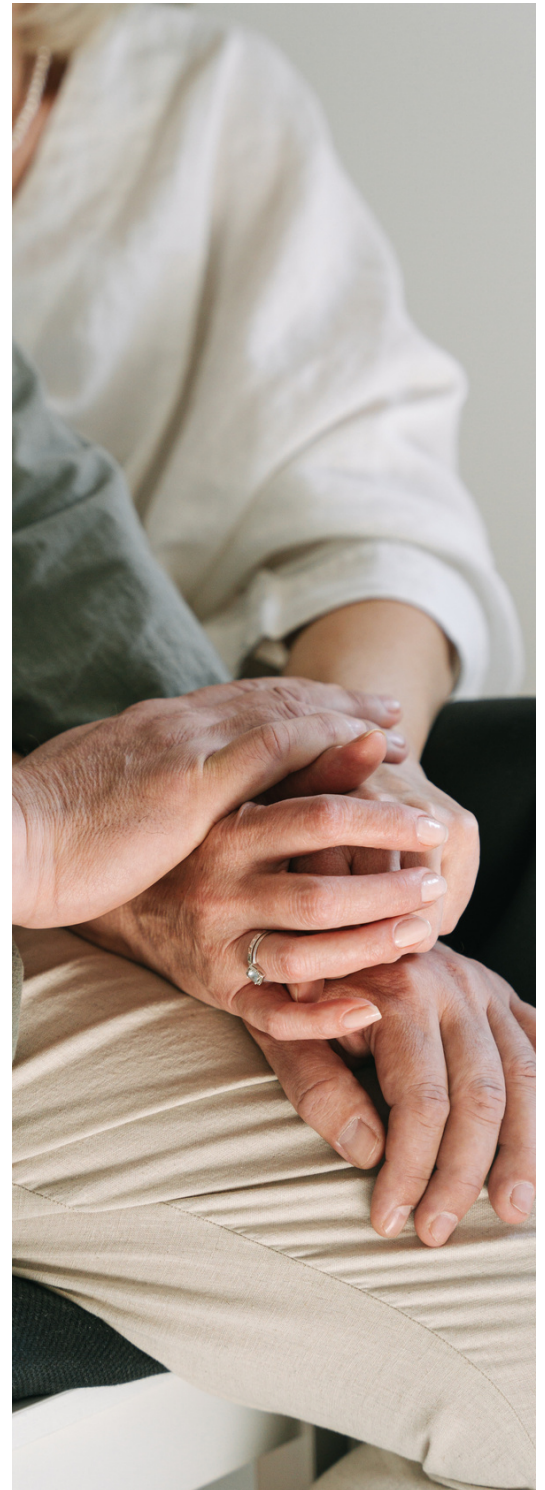
Daily practices

- 10 minutes of mindfulness or meditation
- Gentle movement (walking, yoga, stretching)
- Connect with one supportive person
- One activity just for joy (not treatment-related)
- Adequate sleep and nutrition

When to seek immediate support Persistent feelings of hopelessness

- Thoughts of self-harm
- Complete social withdrawal
- Inability to function at work/home
- Severe relationship breakdown

If you experience any red flags, contact your counsellor immediately or call Lifeline 13 11 14



Need support?

Contact your Genea fertility counsellor or access our free 3-week online program featuring relaxation techniques and peer support.

w [genea.com.au](https://www.genea.com.au) p 1300 361 795

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