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let us help you achieve  
your own miracle!*



# Designated (Known) Donor Frequently Asked Questions

## **What should designated semen donors expect during their participation?**

Designated semen donors go through the same screening process as anonymous and identity disclosure (open ID) semen donors. This includes: screening for infectious diseases, testing for sperm quality, a physical exam, and the acquisition of medical history information. Unlike the case of anonymous and identity disclosure donors, the overall process is very focused and quick. Semen donations are provided and a repeat screening is conducted 6 months later.

## **Is it true that some men can be excluded from becoming a donor?**

Health Canada regulations have several exclusion criteria that prohibits certain men from participating as anonymous or identity disclosure (open ID) semen donors. Two of the main exclusion criteria that affect a significant number of men are:

- Men over the age of 40.
- Any man who has had sex with another man, even once, since 1977. This affects many men in the gay community from participating.

However, the Donor Semen Special Access Programme (DSSAP) allows for the inclusion of both these groups (gay men and men over the age of 40) as Designated or Known Donors. Provided that the results of the initial and the repeat screening are satisfactory, Health Canada will issue a special authorization to release the samples. ReproMed has wealth of experience in this area as we have helped numerous individuals who fall in the above categories successfully complete the DSSAP application and participate as semen donors.

## **Why is the six months quarantine period necessary?**

The six months quarantine period is a regulatory requirement set out in Health Canada Regulations. Since the 1970s, the use of donor semen has been restricted to only frozen quarantined samples. This approach allows for sometime to pass between the initial and repeat screening, which ensures proper detection of any transmissible disease. This is a very important step to guarantee the absolute safety of the recipient and the offspring. The quarantine period is applied *in all cases* where semen from a non-sexually intimate partner is used (for insemination) regardless of the sexual orientation of the donor.

## **What type of testing is required for a designated donor?**

Designated donors are screened for the same panel of diseases as anonymous and identity disclosure (open ID) donors. Specific genetic testing is optional and available. For details about ReproMed's screening protocol, please visit:

[http://www.repromed.ca/sperm\\_donor\\_screening.html](http://www.repromed.ca/sperm_donor_screening.html)



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***How long does it take to complete the application?***

An average of 6 – 8 months is required to complete the application from the day of the donor’s initial visit until the day that the samples are released for the recipient’s use. Most of this time is used up by the mandatory quarantine period; the rest is needed to complete the donor screening and if a special release from Health Canada (DSSAP) is required.

***How cost effective is the designated donor program?***

The designated donor program is the most cost effective method to procure donor semen vials. On average, a single donor application results in the release of 10-15 semen vials. The cost of these vials is less than half of the costs of identity disclosure (open ID) donors and is even less expensive than anonymous donor vials.

***When and how can the released designated donor samples be used?***

Once released from quarantine, designated donor samples could be used immediately or after many years without the need for additional steps. This allows for subsequent pregnancies guaranteed from the same donor. The released samples could be used in any procedure depending on their quality; this includes in-clinic insemination, in-vitro fertilization and ReproMed’s own home insemination program:

[http://www.repromed.ca/home\\_insemination.html](http://www.repromed.ca/home_insemination.html).

***The designated donor or the recipient does not reside in Toronto, could this be a problem?***

The regulations require that all semen donations should be provided on the premises of the sperm bank. This will mandate the designated donor to visit our facility. We work diligently with donors who do not reside in Toronto to offer them a convenient and flexible schedule. We are able to complete the application, screening and sample collection within few visits. We have helped many similar cases by scheduling all appointments during a single trip to Toronto that lasts only for few days. On the other hand, the recipient does not need to visit our facility. She can choose to have the consultation by phone and all the information to be transmitted by Email. ReproMed can arrange for the samples to be shipped to the recipient’s location once they are released from quarantine.

*Should you have any additional questions, please contact a member of the Sperm Bank team at:*

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