



# THE FERTILITY CENTER *of Charleston*

Dear Prospective Patient,

Welcome! We are grateful that you have chosen The Fertility Center of Charleston to help grow your family!

Our dedicated team understands the importance of this decision and we will make every effort to guide, encourage, and support you on the journey from evaluation to treatment and pregnancy. Some of the treatment options available are ovulation induction (OI) with intrauterine insemination (IUI), in vitro fertilization (IVF), egg freezing, pre-implantation genetic testing (PGS), and donor eggs.

We are well aware of the emotional strain this process can bring to a family, so please know that our staff will make every effort to make each step as comfortable and easy for you as possible. You are in competent and caring hands and we promise to provide the best possible care to help you achieve success.

We also understand that fertility treatments can be financially challenging. We participate in and offer many unique programs and financing options which can aid in offsetting the costs of treatment.

In the following pages, we have provided some additional details about The Fertility Center of Charleston and your new patient visit.

Again, thank you so much for choosing The Fertility Center of Charleston. We look forward to meeting you at your new patient visit!

Sincerely,

*Stephanie D. Singleton, M.D.*

Dr. Stephanie Singleton and the staff of The Fertility Center of Charleston



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## WHAT TO EXPECT DURING YOUR FIRST VISIT

Welcome to The Fertility Center of Charleston. We hope your first visit here will enable you to get a chance to meet our staff and see our facility. To make the most out of your first visit, we feel it is important that we receive any fertility-related medical records that you may have from your current or past physicians or your partner's physicians.

We request that you arrive fifteen (15) minutes prior to your initial consultation so that you can complete and finalize any remaining paper work. A member of our staff will check your blood pressure, height, and weight, and record allergies and current medications. You will then start with a one hour evaluation with Dr. Singleton. She will conduct a comprehensive medical history to identify possible causes of infertility and will discuss the possible etiologies of your infertility and the tests we use to establish a diagnosis. She may also discuss treatment options, along with the advantages and disadvantages of each treatment. The next step is typically a transvaginal ultrasound of the uterus and ovaries. This is the first step in determining if there is an abnormality of the reproductive tract.

Please remember that 20% of all couples have more than one cause of infertility and therefore, even if you are currently suspicious about or know a current cause of your infertility, a thorough evaluation is necessary to identify other causes. It is also important to remember that approximately 40% of all cases of infertility are from a male factor cause. The evaluation for male factor infertility starts with a semen analysis and we therefore strongly recommend that this test be performed during your initial visit so we can discuss the presence or absence of a male factor component.

Following this consultation, you will meet with one of our nurse coordinators who will help to coordinate your care. She will be in charge of scheduling your diagnostic tests and starting your treatment plan. After your nursing visit you will then have an opportunity to meet with our financial coordinator to discuss your insurance coverage, typical cost associated with your evaluation and treatment plan, and financial programs we have in place.

Please be reassured that you will receive all of the information and guidance necessary to make informed and appropriate treatment decisions together with our clinical team. Your satisfaction is very important to us. We look forward to seeing you soon!



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## TREATMENT OPTIONS

The Fertility Center of Charleston provides a wide range of treatment options, from basic to state of the art. We have a very specialized team of infertility professionals focused on providing you with all the information and guidance needed to make informed and appropriate treatment decisions.

After your initial consultation and completion of your infertility evaluation your treatment plan will be tailored and customized according to your needs and cause of your infertility. Here are some of the treatment options we are able to offer.

### **OVULATION INDUCTION AND INTRAUTERINE INSEMINATION (IUI)**

Fertility medications are used to stimulate the ovaries to produce 1-3 mature eggs and enhance the pregnancy rates per cycle. Blood tests and ultrasounds are used to monitor the progress of follicular growth and eventually determine the best time to perform the insemination. Semen is then processed to maximize the number of healthy motile sperm available to fertilize the mature egg(s). A catheter is used to deposit the processed sperm past the cervix and into the uterus. The concentration of sperm available to fertilize the egg(s) is of greater magnitude with IUI than would be found after intercourse, thus increasing the chance that fertilization will occur. This is a painless, in-office procedure.

Candidates for IUI include patients with infertility related to cervical factors, slight male factor infertility, and unexplained infertility. Success rates vary and depend on the age and diagnosis of the patient.

### **IN-VITRO FERTILIZATION (IVF)**

In-Vitro fertilization is an option for those in which other basic treatment options (like IUI) are not an option. It is a more aggressive and involved treatment but yields the highest success rates. This treatment utilizes fertility medications to stimulate the ovaries to produce multiple mature eggs per treatment cycle. Several blood tests and ultrasounds are used to monitor the progress of the cycle and egg growth. At the optimal time the eggs are then retrieved from the ovary and fertilized in the embryology laboratory. After 5 days of incubation in the IVF laboratory, quality embryo(s) will be frozen. In a subsequent cycle, the uterus is prepared, using hormones, for optimal implantation. When ultrasound evaluation shows that the uterine lining is optimal, an embryo will be transferred into the uterus.

Candidates for IVF treatment are patients with failed tubal-reversal or tubal blockage, moderate to severe male factor infertility, failed treatment with ovulation induction and IUI, endometriosis, recurrent pregnancy loss, and those wishing genetic screening of embryos to prevent inheritable diseases.



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## **PREIMPLANTATION GENETIC DIAGNOSIS (PGD)**

Preimplantation Genetic Diagnosis is a test developed to help couples with a family history of genetically transmitted diseases to prevent this disease in their child. It is a procedure used in conjunction with in vitro fertilization (IVF) to screen embryos for a known chromosomal abnormality and a specific genetic disorder. Using PGD we can then transfer only chromosomally unaffected embryos (without the genetic disorder) into the uterus.

## **PREIMPLANTATION GENETIC SCREENING**

Preimplantation Genetic Screening is a similar test to PGD but is not used to detect specific diseases. This test is a more general evaluation of the chromosomes of embryos to select chromosomally normal embryos for transfer. In standard IVF, we select embryos based on their level of appropriate development and appearance. This test actually allows us to determine which embryos are chromosomally normal. It can increase pregnancy rates and live births per transfer and help to reduce recurrent pregnancy loss.

## **DONOR EGGS**

We provide donor egg services through the use of frozen donor oocytes available from My Egg Bank®. The use of a donor egg bank allows potential recipients a wider selection of donor oocytes ready for immediate use. After patient selection of a donor, the frozen eggs are shipped to our laboratory and then, when the patient's uterine lining is appropriate, they are thawed and fertilized creating embryos which are then transferred into the patient's uterus. If more embryos are available than selected for transfer, they may be cryopreserved for future use if the recipient so desires.

Candidates for the use of donor eggs are those patients who are not able to use their own eggs due to age, diminished ovarian reserve, or genetic disease.

## **EGG FREEZING**

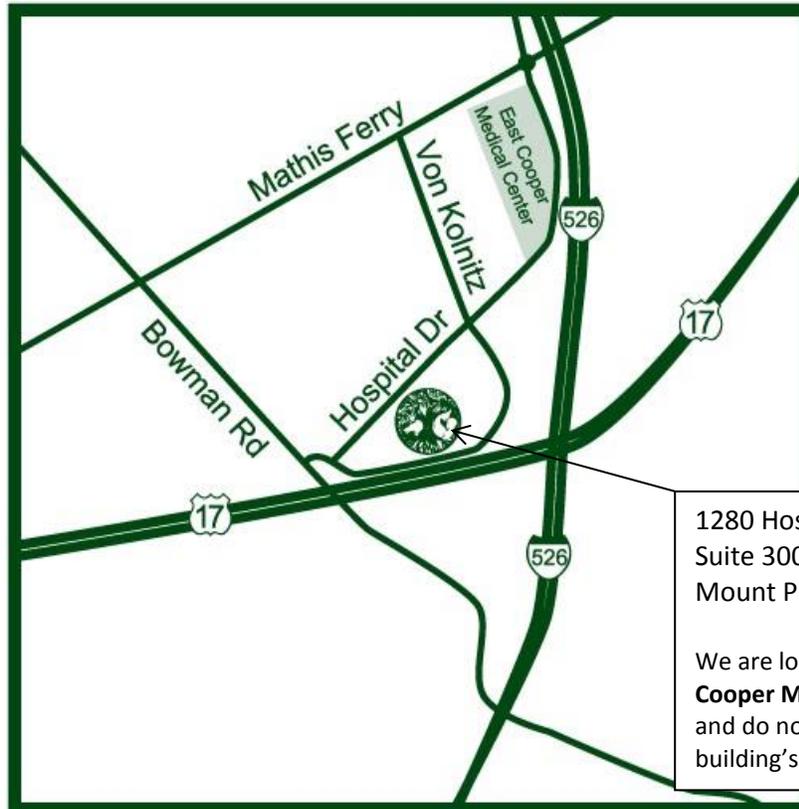
Improvements in freezing technologies have allowed those who wish to freeze eggs for fertility preservation or other reasons to do so. Ultra-rapid freezing, called vitrification, is used after eggs are obtained from stimulated ovaries similar to an IVF cycle, without having to be fertilized.

Candidates for egg freezing are those who wish to delay pregnancy but want to preserve or bank their best quality eggs while they are young. Other candidates are those who may need treatments that could potentially affect future fertility, like chemotherapy or removal of the ovaries. Egg freezing success rates depend on the age and diagnosis of the patient.



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## Mount Pleasant Office



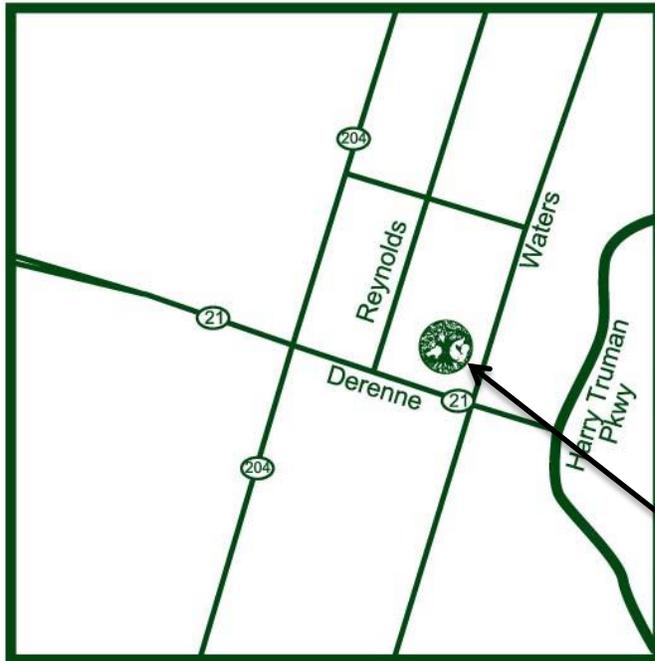
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# THE FERTILITY CENTER *of Charleston*

## Savannah Office



SAVANNAH

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We are located on the 4<sup>th</sup> floor of the Candler Professional Office Building, which is on the campus of Candler Hospital.



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