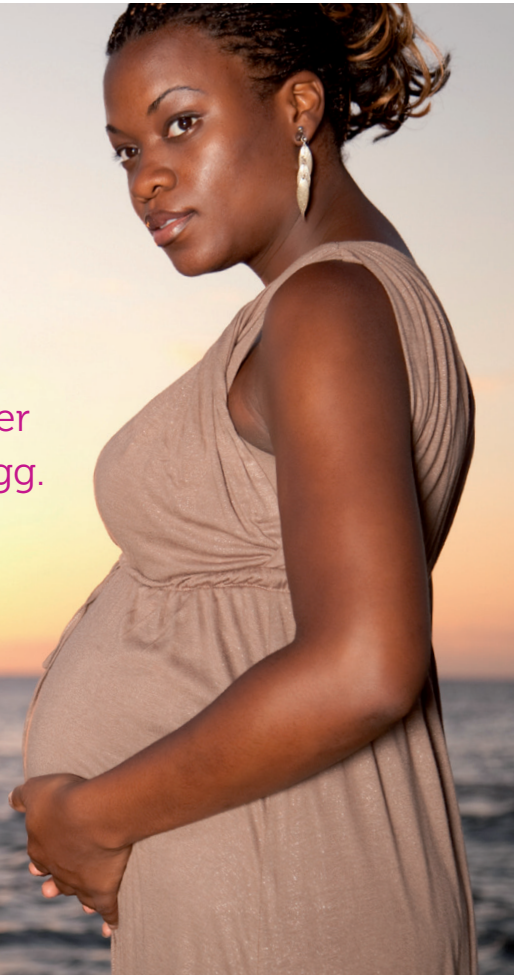


Do you need a donor egg?

Like many couples, you may have been told your best chance of a successful IVF cycle is by using donor eggs. If this is the case, you will have found out how difficult it is to source a suitable donor. Here is the story of one courageous woman, her battle against cancer, her pursuit to have her own child after chemotherapy, and her search for a donor egg.

DONOR EGG DILEMMA



Jacqueline Rhone is a nurse and married her IT Consultant husband Jeremy in 2005. Just weeks before the wedding, Jacqueline found herself in A&E complaining of chest pains - she put this down to the stress of work and planning her big day. This British couple started married life with all the dreams and aspirations of any newlyweds, but upon returning from honeymoon their world came crashing down. Jacqueline was still unwell and tests revealed that she was suffering from an aggressive non-Hodgkin lymphoma.

She underwent invasive chemotherapy to fight the cancer, the treatment making her tired and sick, as well as causing her hair to fall out. When chemotherapy was finished and Jacqueline's recovery started, the couple then had to face one more major hurdle - the impact on her fertility.

The couple consulted three different doctors and were told it would be a miracle if they conceived on their own.

But after beating cancer, Jacqueline was determined that infertility was not going to beat her either. The couple are both of Caribbean descent and had been told that their best chance of successful IVF was to use a donor egg. Jacqueline told Fertility Road: "I searched the internet and found that the waiting list in the UK for donor eggs could be as long as three years, but the more I looked into getting a black donor egg the more I realised there was no time limit on how long we could wait."

This led her to Google the term 'Caribbean IVF' and the first place that came up was Barbados Fertility Centre. Jacqueline said, "I knew from my first phone call to them that I'd found a team who were going to help us. Their costs were a third of those in the UK and their success rates were triple the national average here! The


team were on our side and not only did they have Caribbean donor eggs, we could also choose the donor based on her heritage, age, her university education and the fact she already had one healthy child. The team at Barbados Fertility Centre worked really hard to get a donor that best suited us."

The couple booked an 11-day trip to Barbados in August 2008 during which three donor eggs were fertilised with Jeremy's sperm. The three embryos were then transferred back to Jacqueline's womb. "I knew I was pregnant before we even left Barbados!" she says.

Back home in London, Jacqueline took the official pregnancy test 14 days after the transfer and confirmed what she already felt - very pregnant! "There were no tears of elation, just great satisfaction."

Jada Nalini Rhone arrived on May 11, 2009, weighing in at a very healthy 9lb 11oz! She dances to reggae, loves yogurt, chocolate and her three cats! Jacqueline said, "I sent a 'thank you' card to the clinic to express our appreciation for this most precious gift. I do wonder how much Jada resembles the donor because, God bless her, she is the full image of Jeremy, even the way her toenails grow at a slant!"

As Jada has just celebrated her first birthday, the couple are already booked to return to Barbados Fertility Centre in October of this year and are using the same donor in the hope of getting a little brother or sister for Jada to play with.

Jacqueline said, "We are so grateful to our donor and really want to share our story to give hope to other couples out there trying to conceive." 

For further information on the work of Barbados Fertility Centre head to www.barbadosivf.org