

Survivors' Experiences with Fertility

"I got my second diagnosis at 31 after I had been cancer-free for 5 years. I had been thinking about having a baby, and the news that my treatment could complicate that was devastating. At the time, everything was a whirlwind. The last thing I wanted to worry about or research was fertility treatment.

LIVESTRONG made it financially possible for my husband and me to freeze embryos. While I was going through treatment, my sister-in-law, Lisa, volunteered to be our surrogate. We were afraid having a baby was never going to happen. LIVESTRONG made the impossible possible."

—SARAH, 33, Two-Time Breast Cancer Survivor

EACH YEAR, MORE THAN 140,000 AMERICANS under the age of 45 are diagnosed with cancer. These individuals face a risk of infertility due to their diagnosis as well as their cancer treatment, particularly from higher dosage and longer treatments. For all individuals diagnosed with cancer who may want to have a child in the future, it is critical that they understand how treatment could affect their fertility and learn about the options for fertility preservation before treatment begins.

The LIVESTRONG Foundation provides fertility services that help individuals diagnosed with cancer become informed about reproductive risks and access fertility preservation options. LIVESTRONG Fertility (www.LIVESTRONG.org/fertility) provides information about the following topics:

- › Fertility resources
- › Cancer and fertility risks
- › Fertility preservation options
- › Parenthood options.

MOST SURVIVORS DO NOT TAKE STEPS TO PRESERVE FERTILITY

The 2012 LIVESTRONG Survey provides important information about survivors' experiences with cancer treatment and fertility. This brief summarizes the answers of 1,333 survey respondents who were diagnosed as adolescents or young adults between 15 and 39 years old.

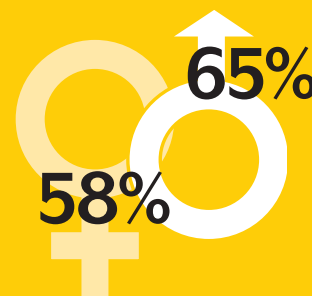
Seventy-six percent of these survey respondents said that they did not try to preserve their fertility before they were treated for cancer. The most common reason for not seeking fertility preservation was a lack of interest in having any or any more children (42% male, 39% female). However, many other survivors did not seek fertility preservation because they did not have information about risks of infertility and preservation options, or they experienced other barriers.

SURVIVORS REPORT BARRIERS TO FERTILITY PRESERVATION

Approximately 14% of males and 21% of females did not receive any information about ways to preserve their fertility before their treatment began (Figure 1). Other reasons that respondents did not seek fertility preservation included not having enough time (18% male, 25% female) and expense (14% male, 13% female).



Of the 2012 survey respondents, 14% of males and 21% of females did not receive any information about options for fertility preservation before their treatment began.



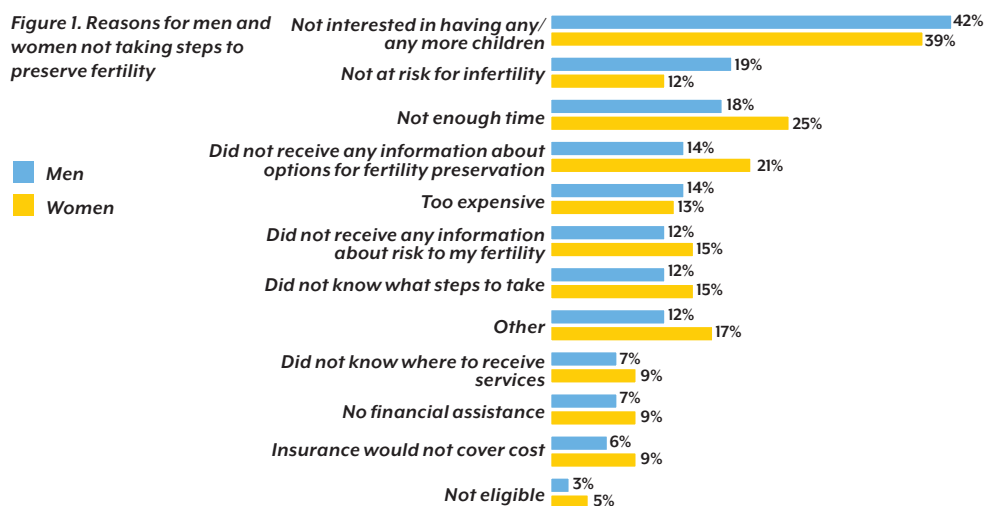
Of respondents who tried to conceive, 65% of males and 58% of females were successful.

About the LIVESTRONG Surveys

The LIVESTRONG Surveys explore cancer survivors' needs and experiences before, during, and after a cancer diagnosis. The 2012 survey was completed by a total of 6,383 survivors. This brief presents findings from 1,333 survivors who were diagnosed in 2002 or later between the ages of 15 and 39, and responded to a question about participating in fertility preservation.

For more information about the LIVESTRONG Surveys, visit www.LIVESTRONG.org/What-We-Do/Our-Approach/Reports-Findings.

Figure 1. Reasons for men and women not taking steps to preserve fertility



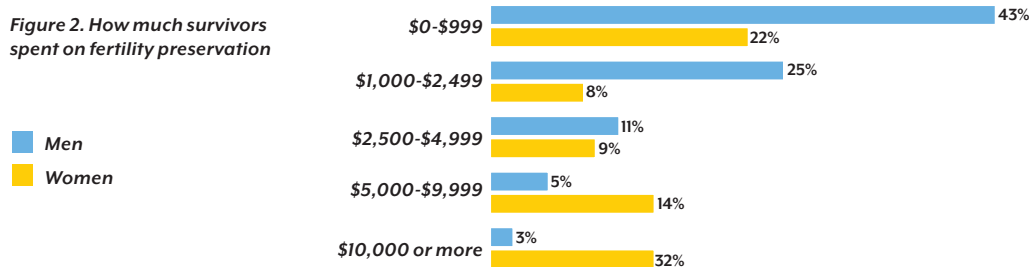
THE MAJORITY OF SURVIVORS WHO WANT TO CONCEIVE ARE SUCCESSFUL

About 18% of survivors tried to conceive after their treatment ended; of those, 65% of males and 58% of females were successful. Among the survivors who were able to get pregnant, approximately 90% of males and 97% of females achieved pregnancy through natural means. Other methods that respondents used were in vitro fertilization (9% male, 5% female), intrauterine insemination (9% male, 5% female), and sperm/embryo/or egg preservation (3% male). (Please note that some respondents reported using more than one method.)

WOMEN PAY MORE FOR FERTILITY PRESERVATION

Overall, women paid more for fertility preservation than men (Figure 2; $p < 0.001$). Among survivors who took steps to preserve their fertility, 43% of men paid less than \$1,000 compared with only 22% of women. Women were more likely than men to report expenditures of \$10,000 or more.

Figure 2. How much survivors spent on fertility preservation

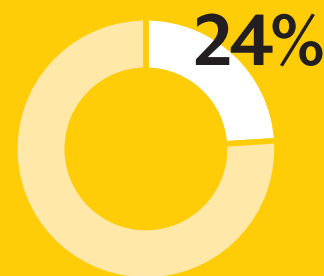


HOW HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS CAN HELP

Before treatment, health care providers should inform all patients of reproductive age about the risk cancer treatment poses to their future fertility, provide information about fertility preservation, and give referrals to services as needed.

Provide patients with information from LIVESTRONG that will help them on their journey as survivors:

- › Fertility Resource Guide, a database of doctors and services, including reproductive endocrinologists, sperm banks, financial assistance, adoption agencies, and legal resources at www.LIVESTRONG.org/fertility or call 855.220.7777.
- › Cancer and Fertility brochure at www.LIVESTRONG.org/What-We-Do/Our-Actions/Professional-Tools-Training/For-Health-Care-Professionals.
- › The Cancer Guide and Tracker App at www.LIVESTRONG.org/Get-Help/Find-More-Resources/cancerguideapp.



Overall, 24% of respondents took steps to preserve their fertility before beginning cancer treatment. The top methods used by those who took steps were

Men

Sperm banking	97%
Testicular tissue freezing	1%

Women

Egg preservation	35%
Embryo preservation	35%
Other	26%
Ovarian tissue freezing	4%

The LIVESTRONG Foundation fights to improve the lives of people affected by cancer now. Created in 1997, the Foundation is known for providing free cancer support services and advocating for policies that improve access to care and quality of life. Known for its powerful brand—LIVESTRONG—the Foundation has become a symbol of hope and inspiration around the world. Since its inception, the Foundation has served 2.5 million people affected by the disease and raised more than \$500 million to support cancer survivors. One of America's top nonprofit organizations, the Foundation has been recognized by industry leaders, including Charity Navigator, the National Health Council, and the Better Business Bureau, for its excellent governance, high standards, and transparency. For more information, visit LIVESTRONG.org.