



Some cancer treatments can reduce your fertility. Some can make it difficult or impossible to get pregnant and have a baby.

How does treatment affect fertility?

Chemotherapy and **some** radiotherapy treatments can reduce your fertility by:

- damaging your ovaries, uterus and fallopian tubes
- reducing the number of ova (eggs) available
- affecting your hormones.

Are these changes permanent?

The effect of cancer treatment on fertility may be temporary or permanent, depending on:

- your age and general health
- the chemotherapy drugs used
- the dose of chemotherapy used
- the area of your body being treated
- the amount of radiation you receive
- whether you have chemotherapy **and** radiotherapy.

What should I do?

Each person's situation, treatment regime and diagnosis is different. Before starting treatment, talk to your doctor, nurse or radiation therapist about:

- how your treatment may affect your fertility
- whether you want to have children in the future.

Your doctor may refer you to a fertility specialist.

! Important

You may still be able to get pregnant during and immediately after your cancer treatment.

You should use a reliable method of **contraception** because some cancer treatments can harm an unborn baby.

Ask your doctor or nurse about what contraception to use during your treatment.

Tell to your doctor or nurse **immediately** if you:

- are already pregnant
- think you may be pregnant
- become pregnant during your treatment.

i For more information

- The Cancer Council has a booklet called *Fertility and Cancer*. Call 13 11 20 or visit cancer.org.au/about-cancer/living-with-cancer
- *Canteen* has information about fertility for young people affected by cancer. Visit canteen.org.au

Key terms

Fertility:	Being able to get pregnant and have a child.
Infertility:	Not being able to get pregnant.
Ovaries:	Two small glands in your abdomen which hold a supply of eggs.
Ova:	The name given to the eggs in your ovaries. When an egg is fertilised by a male sperm, it can develop into a baby.

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