



University of Connecticut  
Health Center

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Office of Communications

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*For Immediate Release*

Distributed July 1, 2004

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## **Donors Needed for Anonymous Egg Donation Program**

*A Gift of Life & Love for Valentine's Day*

Farmington, Conn. – More than 70 couples who have struggled with infertility are waiting for egg donors to help fulfill their dream of having a child. And Donna M. knows how difficult waiting can be.

Donna and her husband Andy tried unsuccessfully to start a family for several years. Eventually, they were referred to The Center for Advanced Reproductive Services at the University of Connecticut Health Center where specialists determined that Donna had premature ovarian failure, and their only hope of conceiving a child was through the donor egg program. The couple was placed on the waiting list and after eight months, they were matched with an anonymous egg donor.

Nine months later their little daughter was born.

"The program gave us hope when there wasn't any hope," Donna said. "Through the generosity of the donor, I have the greatest gift in the world," she said.

Now, healthy, non-smoking women between the ages of 21 and 34 are needed to help many other couples like Donna and Andy. The Center has launched an awareness effort to let people know about the issue of egg donation and the need for donors. Donors are compensated for their effort.

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"For many couples who have struggled with infertility, egg donation has been a very successful treatment," said advanced reproductive specialist Donald B. Maier, M.D. "Egg donation allows the woman who conceives the opportunity to carry and nurture the pregnancy, and establish a biologic relationship with the child," he explained.

"Specifically, egg donation helps women who are unable to conceive because they cannot produce healthy eggs. This can be caused by a variety of problems such as premature ovarian failure, genetic abnormalities, or advanced maternal age," Dr. Maier said.

Egg donation involves many steps. First, potential egg donors and recipients undergo extensive medical and psychological screenings. Then, recipients are placed on medications to stimulate the development of a receptive uterine lining. At the same time, the donor is placed on medications to stimulate the development of multiple follicles within the ovary. When the follicles are mature, an egg aspiration procedure is performed to remove the eggs from the donor's ovary.

The eggs are then fertilized in a lab with the sperm of the recipient's partner. The embryo develops in the lab for three days until they are transferred to the recipient's uterus.

"Egg donation – for both recipients and donors alike – takes a tremendous amount of courage and commitment. Our goal is to guide donors and recipients through the program and find the best match possible to help couples conceive," said Lorry Belanger, a nurse with The Center, which was the first site in New England to help women conceive through donated eggs.

To learn more about becoming a donor in the Anonymous Egg Donation Program, call 860/679-2430 where you will reach Ann Marie McLean, R.N., nurse coordinator for the egg donor program. You can also visit The Center's website at [www.fertilitycenter-uconn.org](http://www.fertilitycenter-uconn.org). All inquiries will be kept strictly confidential.

The University of Connecticut Health Center is composed of three main units: the School of Medicine, the School of Dental Medicine, and the UConn Health System. Founded in 1961, the Health Center pursues a mission of providing outstanding health care education in an environment of exemplary patient care, research and public service.

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