



# Santa Monica women explore egg-freezing

By [Jennifer Maas](#) on November 7, 2015 in [Featured](#)

In early October at The Huntley Hotel in Santa Monica, a group of women attended an #EggSocial hosted by the Beverly Hills-based [Southern California Reproductive Center](#). The event was an informal gathering during which the women were educated about fertility preservation and, most specifically, egg freezing.

But at the end of a night of presentations, dinner and cocktails, there were mixed reactions among the attendees to sticking around to talk to the Daily Press about a subject as sensitive as fertility and pregnancy.

But one woman willing to talk was cervical cancer survivor Sara Krish, who had been a speaker that night. Krish, owner of The Fly Buddha in Redondo Beach, thought it was important to share her experience so that others might give themselves the possibility she gave herself.

“When I went to see Dr. Surrey [of SCRC] for my consultation, I was in an extremely fragile and fearful state,” Krish said. “I had just received news that I had cervical cancer. My oncology team urged me to consider egg freezing at SCRC before my treatment began because chances were high that I would have a hysterectomy followed by chemotherapy and radiation. Every step — from setting up the initial appointment to going through the process with Dr. Surrey to talking about my financial concerns — put me at ease. I knew I was in good hands.”

SCRC is proud to hear that Krish’s experience freezing her eggs with them was such a positive one, as they strive to see those same results with all of their patients.

According to Dr. Shahin Ghadir, between 15 and 20 percent of SCRC’s patients are based in Santa Monica, and several Santa Monica residents have attended their #EggSocials. However, no Santa Monica-based patients or #EggSocial attendees were willing to comment to the Daily Press on their experiences with egg freezing. The factors that affect a woman’s decision to freeze her eggs — age, illness and medical condition — could play a role in the decision to talk about it.

Egg freezing offers a protection plan for women to preserve their fertility and build a healthy family in the future, according to Ghadir. Ghadir said that a woman’s egg quality peaks between 20 and 28 years old, but eggs can still be acceptable from age 29 to 38. However, the quality of eggs drops significantly after 39. Ghadir said the problem with these numbers is that few 20-year-old women are considering freezing their eggs, but if they did they could save themselves reproductive trouble in the future.

Ghadir said one of the best things a woman can do, even if they are young and not yet considering freezing eggs, is check her anti-mullerian hormone level. The AMH blood test, which tells a woman about her egg reserve and which is offered by SCRC at \$150, offers results that Ghadir said are “priceless.”



“It is one of the most accurate tests and will help you decide if now is the time, based on your egg reserves, to consider freezing your eggs,” Ghadir said.

Ghadir explained that the egg freezing process is relatively simple.

“Self-administered fertility drugs are given for 10 to 12 days to stimulate the development of multiple eggs in a woman’s ovaries,” Ghadir said. “Then the eggs are harvested in a 5- to 10-minute process during which you are in a deep sleep. You won’t feel or remember anything. The entire process takes two weeks.”

Ghadir explained that SCRC keeps the eggs until clients are ready to use them. However, the doctor said some patients don’t ever use them.

“We like to think of us as an insurance policy in some ways,” Ghadir said. “A backup plan. We are here if and when you need us. But if you find that the time ends up working out for you sooner, that you find the right person and want to try for a baby now, the eggs are here if you need them. And if you don’t, you don’t.”

One of the difficult things facing women who are looking to freeze their eggs is the expense, as the medical costs related to egg freezing total close to \$10,000. Though some companies are now including egg freezing in their benefit plans, those are still rare exceptions. That’s why Krish’s nonprofit, The Fly Buddha Foundation, is partnering with SCRC to offer financial assistance and resources to women with gynecological cancer who wish to preserve their fertility prior to treatment.

“With my unique experience, I see egg freezing as a way to give hope to women who are experiencing a great sense of fear, loss, and hopelessness,” Krish said of the partnership. “Saving or freezing my eggs gave me something to look forward to and put my mind on the future after the cancer diagnosis made me feel I had no guarantee.”

Krish believes that the SCRC staff understand the sensitivity of the egg-freezing process.

“Women are coming to SCRC with a hope for biological children, many after having difficulty with the process,” she said. “Everyone is putting their faith in SCRC to give them ‘Mini-Mes’ someday.”

<http://smdp.com/santa-monica-women-explore-egg-freezing/151991>