

Experiences of females undergoing ovarian cryopreservation: A systematic review and thematic synthesis

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Background Ovarian tissue cryopreservation (OTC) is an emerging fertility preservation (FP) approach for females but despite technical developments over the last 20 years, there remains limited information on patient experience of this procedure.

Aim To explore the experiences of young girls and women who underwent OTC using a systematic review of qualitative studies with thematic synthesis framework

Methods Protocol was registered on PROSPERO (CRD42020192882). Major electronic databases were searched from 1946 to May 2020 and reference lists of relevant articles were hand-searched. Any studies that described a qualitative inquiry and highlighted the experiences of women with regard to OTC were included. Two independent reviewers screened the title and abstracts.

Results Nineteen studies were assessed for full text eligibility and four were included in analysis. 144 verbatim quotations from 85 participants in high income countries (UK, USA and Denmark) were included. Four themes emerged (figure). Verbatim quotes from participants shown in figure.

Conclusion

Healthcare professionals involved in the care of young girls and women undergoing this method need to also take into consideration the emotional wellbeing of the patients as well as the time and expertise it requires to help them make an informed decision. Given the novel nature of this procedure, young girls or women undergoing this method of fertility preservation should be given clear information about what the procedure entails and followed up meticulously.

Figure: Schematic representation of generated themes.

