



ROCKY MOUNTAIN FERTILITY CENTER
9235 CROWN CREST BLVD. SUITE 250
PARKER, COLORADO 80138
303-999-3877

Stopping Infertility Treatment: When Couples Disagree by The American Fertility Association

Many couples come to a crossroads with infertility treatment and decide that it may be time to stop. This decision is tough, and can be even tougher if you and your partner do not agree on where to go next. Perhaps you have accepted the idea of childfree living, even though it means adjusting your entire life plan. Or, perhaps you want to pursue adoption, donor eggs, or surrogacy. If you have your mind on one alternative, and your partner refuses, it can be understandably upsetting. Whether you choose to end treatment and accept childfree living, or pursue third party reproduction, you will likely face three difficult challenges:

1. Being afraid that you will not be able to cope
2. Feeling unable to imagine a life without children
3. Wondering if your partnership will survive this process

Careful consideration is essential to help the two of you make the right decision for your future.

Do you disagree?

Partners often differ in how to plan and resolve fertility treatment. Men are more likely to want to quit fertility treatments before their partners, while women are more likely to want to start new treatments and try new things. Alternatively, it can be especially frustrating for you, tired of the demands of drugs, injections, inseminations, retrievals, and transfers, if your partner doesn't want you to stop fertility treatments. If you and your partner just cannot agree on how to proceed when you come to a crossroads, relationship troubles can ensue. This can prolong treatment or cause problems at home. If one partner becomes bitter or angry, he or she may want to stop treatment out of resentment. You can both work to avoid this by remaining open-minded and flexible along your journey.

Communication is key

It is not easy to decide to end treatment. It can be even harder if you and your partner disagree on what your future should hold. When differences arise regarding fertility treatment, it is paramount that you and your partner are open and honest about your feelings, especially when it comes to choosing to end treatment or pursue non-genetic parenthood. If there is friction at home, an individual or couples counselor can help you both with this process. Negotiate, express your different points of view, and have an open and honest discussion about parenthood and where to go next.

Letting go of the dream

It is difficult to give up on the longstanding dream of parenthood. Deciding to stop can be one of the most difficult decisions you make on your fertility journey. If you decide to let go of the dream of parenthood, allow yourself to grieve and re-shift your priorities. Give yourself plenty of time to mourn, and treat yourself right, as you restructure your life after fertility treatments. The two of you can support each other by being honest, open, and caring for each other's needs as well as your own. The infertility journey can be long, exhausting, and complex. No matter which direction you go, it may be comforting to know that you may be able to revisit your decision later, try new options, or begin treatment again. Unfortunately no one can tell you which way to go; you must carefully reflect and find the right resolution for you.