

SEX & CONCEPTION ISSUE

Living with HIV and making decisions about whether or how to have children brings up many different issues and feelings for people. From sperm-washing to fostering, to doing it naturally or not at all. Would you like to have children but are worried about transmitting HIV and/or HCV? Do you have concerns about the genetic risk of haemophilia? Did you think having children was impossible? For many people in our situation the choice of having children has not been on offer. For many, having children naturally has been a choice or accident as they are in any one else's life who doesn't live with HIV.

There have been recent news reports of improved sperm washing and assisted conception techniques and improved choices for people in our situation, but what is the reality? Is this something you want to think about? Are you getting the right information? Are you getting the right support to make the right decisions for yourself? Is funding a problem?

When Birchgrove was approached to consider writing an issue on conception we knew it wouldn't be easy as the strength of feelings and emotions around this topic are so acute for some. A number of people contacted us stating that although they had experience they could share with others, it was just too emotional and personal to write something about it.

As many of us are facing a changing life expectancy due to improved medication we also have changing needs, and many people are now looking towards the future and considering having children and a family. We hope that through the articles, personal experiences, reports and information we have collated on Conception and related topics that this edition of Birchgrove will give an opportunity for readers to become more informed on this topic.

We hope that we have approached this issue sensitively enough and understand that for some this will be difficult reading material.

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