

# Oncofertility

## *Cancer and Your Fertility Preservation Options*

written and edited by

Martin Casella, Roger Holzberg, Adele Sender



*“My role as an oncofertility specialist is first to think about the immediate fertility issues of my newly diagnosed cancer patients, and then to guide them through the entire range of long-term reproductive issues that may result from their treatment.*

– Laxmi Kondapalli, M.D., MSCE

Reimagine Well Learn Guide:

## Oncofertility

### *Fertility Preservation Options And Cancer*

Martin Casella

Roger Holzberg

Adele Sender

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*“When I see a newly diagnosed oncofertility patient and meet with their family, one of the most important things that I want to get across in our first meeting is that they have choices. And that many of these choices were not available even five years ago.”*

*— Laxmi Kondapalli, M.D., MSCE*

*“Always ask about the impact of treatment on fertility as a part of informed consent before cancer treatment starts.”*

*— Julie Messina, PA-C*

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This Oncofertility Learn Guide is designed to help patients and their families overcome the fear and anxiety of a cancer diagnosis, and to educate them on the Fertility Preservation issues that may result from treatment.

Our goal is to provide concise, evidence-based, easily understood resources to be used throughout the entire cancer journey and to provide a (private and safe) support community where patients and their families can learn from survivors and caregivers who have already been on this journey.

—Team Reimagine Well

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## NOTE:

Both Parts 1 and 2 of this Learn Guide are designed to go hand in hand. We strongly encourage you to read forward only to the phase you are in at this moment:

- |             |             |
|-------------|-------------|
| ● Diagnosis | ● Healing   |
| ● Treatment | ● Wellbeing |

As you use Part 1 to educate yourself - and get coached on how to become an empowered patient - you may want to create your online patient or caregiver Support Community, which can be accessed at <http://www.reimaginewellcommunity.com/reimaginewell>. The details on how to best use the Support Community are found in Part 2 of this Learn Guide.

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WELCOME

Three messages to newly diagnosed patients (and your families,) who have concerns about your reproductive future.

**From Leonard Sender, M.D., Co-Founder of Reimagine Well.**

“Information can lead to knowledge. Knowledge is power. You have to become empowered to learn, then ask the right questions and get the information you need. The best way to get the type of treatment that is right for you, that will lead to the type of outcome we want for you, is to become fully engaged in the process.”



The following messages are from Julia Messina, PA-C, and Laxmi Kondapalli, M.D. Both are experts in the medical field of Oncofertility.

*“Patients with cancer and their families need to start thinking about fertility preservation at the time of the patient’s diagnosis. There may be several options available to a patient, but many of these options must be performed before cancer treatment begins.”*

— Julie Messina, PA-C

*“My role as an oncofertility specialist is to not only think about the fertility issues of my patients, but also to expand that to consider the whole host of long-term reproductive side effects that may result as an outcome of cancer treatment.”*

— Laxmi Kondapalli, M.D., MSCE

Have a copy of this Enhanced eBook with you at all meetings with your Health Team and Healthcare Professionals, and use it as a guide to get all of your pre-treatment questions answered.

— Team Reimagine Well

*“The fertility issue is huge... it’s a bigger blow than the cancer diagnosis. The “Oh my God, I can’t have kids now” moment. It was worse than “You have breast cancer!”*

*— 32-Year-Old With Breast Cancer*



*“The cancer is just a chapter in your life. Then it’s over and you keep going. The infertility issue changes the whole course of your life”*

*— 23-Year-Old With Hodgkin’s Lymphoma*

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## CONTRIBUTING EXPERTS



Dr. Kondapalli is board certified in Obstetrics and Gynecology and the subspecialty Reproductive Endocrinology and Infertility, and is a Fellow of the American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists.

Her research interests center on fertility preservation, ovarian response to medical therapies, and assisted reproduction outcomes. She has authored many publications in the area of reproductive medicine, serves on the scientific advisory boards of multiple oncology groups, and was the recipient of the 2013 AAMC Women in Medicine and Science Professional Leadership Award. At the time this Oncofertility guide was created, she was on faculty at the University of Colorado as Assistant Professor in the Division of Reproductive Endocrinology and Infertility, and recipient of a National Institutes of Health Career Development grant.

She is currently a physician at the Colorado Center for Reproductive Medicine.



**Laxmi Kondapalli, M.D., MSCE**

*“I would describe myself as a physician/scientist. I see patients in a clinical setting, and I do a lot of research looking closely at clinical outcomes.”*



Julie Messina, PA-C, is a licensed Physician Assistant in the field of Oncology. Julie was inspired to work in this field by her experience with young adult patients during their Survivorship, in the hope of giving them the most meaningful lives beyond cancer. She currently lives in Colorado with her husband and son, and enjoys skiing and white water rafting.

### **Julie Messina, Physician Assistant**

*“My name is Julie Messina. I work as a part of the team with cancer doctors. We’re thinking about the long-term consequences, about things we can do to help children have a very long healthy life beyond their treatment.”*



### Jocelyn Harrison, MPH, RD

*“My name is Jocelyn Harrison. Although a diagnosis can be overwhelming, you have a part to play in your own treatment. Be empowered. This is your journey.”*

Jocelyn Harrison received her Master of Public Health from UCLA and completed a dietetic internship at the Los Angeles Veterans Hospital. She has developed nutrition programs and marketing for the USDA Dietary Guidelines for Americans, Choose Health LA, and the American Diabetes Association. In addition to nutritional and lifestyle advice, her Reimagine Well work includes literature reviews and helping with “immersive healing environment” patient benefit studies.

*“I love discussing fertility preservation with patients because it means that we are planning for their life beyond cancer. It is seen as a discussion of hope.”*

– Julie Messina, PA-C

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