

Embryo Adoption FAQs

Why Choose the Snowflakes® Program?

Snowflakes Embryo Adoption is uniquely child-centered. **Open Adoption Encouraged**

We are a child-centered adoption agency and we believe in open adoption when placing kids for adoption. One important lesson our society has learned over the last century is that open adoption is healthier for the children. Adoption professionals agree that children for adoption should know the identity of their biological parents, and should have information regarding their heritage. Nightlight extends this invaluable lesson to our Snowflakes Embryo Adoption program, and provides a safe environment for both the donor and adopting families. Some embryo donation/adoption programs require anonymity, or charge additional fees for services enabling open adoption. Because Nightlight believes strongly in advocating and facilitating open adoption, there is no additional fee.

Donated Embryos are not Disbursed Among Multiple Families

We are child-centered, and we do our best to keep siblings together. Adoption professionals agree that keeping siblings together is a paramount value. Whether children are adopted from another country, through foster care, or domestic placement, we always work diligently to place all siblings into one adopting family. Nightlight extends this family value to embryo child adoption. Our Snowflakes team provides matching services that take into consideration the preferences of both the donor and the adopting families and then places all of the donor's embryos into that adoptive family's care.

Since our program encourages open adoption, communication between matched families will be mutually agreed upon between them. Clearly, limiting the number of families in which full genetic siblings exist is a benefit to all. The more families involved, the more difficult it becomes to establish and maintain relationships. It should be noted that some programs charge additional fees to keep the sibling set of embryos together or even charge individual fees for each embryo received. Nightlight values keeping a single donor's embryos together and charges no additional fees.

Fertility Clinics - the Choice is Yours

You choose the clinic. Some embryo donation/adoption programs require you to use their clinic for the Frozen Embryo Transfer (FET). Nightlight allows you to use any clinic you choose for the procedure. We will arrange the shipping to the clinic of your choice, and prepare the doctor in advance to expect the embryos. This convenience may provide you a significant savings in travel expenses. If you choose a clinic near your home, your reproductive endocrinologist (RE) may be able to provide you with medical care levels not available from a distant RE. In other words, you can reschedule your FET if your doctor believes it is necessary, and you can have the

optimal number of embryos transferred each time, without incurring additional travel expenses.

Of course, you may choose to travel to the fertility clinic where your embryos were created and are being stored. Snowflakes also has partner clinics to recommend to you. Flexibility and choice are yours through Snowflakes!

How is "embryo adoption" through Nightlight different from "embryo donation" that clinics offer?

Most clinic embryo donation programs will not provide any personal information about the donor family, only their medical background. There is no contact between the families before or after the birth, even through an intermediary. The clinic is only required to keep records of the donation for seven years and additional information about the donor family is typically not released, even in the event of a medical emergency. Embryos are be donated directly to the clinic and the clinic determines who receives them. If a donor family has a large number of embryos, they may be given to multiple families [e.g.: If 10 embryos are donated anonymously, 4 are given to family A; 3 are given to family B; and 3 are given to family C]. This means that there could be fully related genetic siblings in several families, living within a reasonably close geographic proximity and none of them would be known by the other.

Snowflakes provides the same safeguards that the traditional adoption process offers, allowing you access to important information about the genetic family that can help your child answer their questions about their origins. You also have the opportunity to have a relationship with your child's genetic family. Whether you exchange pictures and letters, have telephone conversations, or choose to meet the genetic family, you will know that you have access to information about your child's history. Nightlight is available to facilitate communication between the families and is also available to educate and work with you about how to talk to your child(ren) about their unique conception and adoption-related issues. While this isn't the solution for everyone, we believe that families who prefer an adoption model should have access to it.

Who would want to participate in this program?

Snowflakes can help create families for couples whose infertility does not allow them to create their own biological families, specifically couples considering egg or sperm donation, or couples who want to build their family through adoption and be able to experience pregnancy and control the pre-natal environment of their child.

Why would genetic parents choose embryo adoption instead of donation?

The genetic family wants to select who will adopt their embryos and know the outcome of the adoption and transfer. They are reassured that Snowflakes provides the same safeguards that the traditional adoption process offers. The genetic family knows the adoptive family has been screened for a criminal history and child abuse record, and received education about how to

parent an adopted child. They have the peace of mind of having handpicked a family for these children. They also have the opportunity to have contact with the adopting family to whatever extent both families are comfortable.

Why would we choose embryo adoption instead of donation?

You would have a chance to have a relationship with your child's genetic family. Whether you exchange pictures and letters, have telephone conversations, or choose to meet the genetic family, you will know that you have access to information about your child's history. Nightlight is available to facilitate communication between the families and is also available to educate and work with you about how to talk to your child(ren) about their unique conception and adoption-related issues. Why would we choose embryo adoption instead of traditional adoption of a newborn? The most obvious difference between an embryo adoption and a traditional domestic adoption is the pregnancy experience.

Adoptive moms are able to experience the joys (and challenges!) of pregnancy and labor. You also have the peace of mind of knowing what your child was exposed to during pregnancy.

Although an embryo adoption allows more control in some ways, it provides less in other ways. You cannot choose the gender of the child as you might in an international or older child adoption, and you cannot change your mind and choose not to accept the baby for whatever reason after he or she is born. In addition, because up to three embryos are transferred at once, you might have twins or triplets. Embryo adoption can also be more difficult emotionally than traditional adoption, since there is no guarantee that in the end you will have a child.

How many embryo adoptions has Nightlight completed?

Since 1997, Nightlight has completed over 800 embryo adoptions. Nightlight completes about 50-70 embryo adoptions each year and with ongoing embryo transfers there are always 25-35 babies due at any given time.

Does Nightlight encourage the creation and freezing of embryos?

No, we are trying to provide a loving option to the families of the over 600,000 (estimated) embryos frozen in clinics throughout the United States. As people (and clinics) have become more aware of all their available options in regards to the disposition of their embryos following in-vitro fertilization and become more attentive to the possibility of having remaining embryos, we have noticed an increased effort to limit the number of embryos that are created and to have plans in place for the disposition of their embryos following IVF. We would really prefer to work ourselves out of a job!

Program Criteria for Embryo Adoption

What are the basic requirements for an adopting family?

You must have a completed home study. This is the same home study used to evaluate and educate adopting parents in traditional domestic adoptions. The adopting mother must also be able to carry a child to term. Your doctor will be asked to complete a form stating that there are no contraindications to pregnancy. If the adopting mother is unable to carry a pregnancy, the adopting parents may secure a gestational carrier through a licensed provider. For additional requirements please contact a Snowflakes representative for our most current information packet.

Is there an age limit?

Most placing families prefer matching with a married couple under the age of 45. We will accept applications from couples over the age of 45 provided that the female is under 48 and the male is under 55, but advise against it. Adoptive parents older than 45 should anticipate waiting longer than our average matching timeframe of six months.

Can couples who do not have an infertility diagnosis adopt embryos?

Yes. Some genetic families prefer to place their embryos with families who already have children so the children born from the embryos are sure to have siblings. Other genetic families prefer to place with families who do not yet have children.

Does Snowflakes handle out-of-state embryo adoptions?

Yes. We can work with adopting families living in any state. You would just need to work with a local adoption agency to complete your home study.

Can single women adopt through Snowflakes?

Yes, single women aged 45 and younger are eligible to apply. However, we feel it only fair to tell you that in our experience genetic families prefer placement with a married couple. As a single woman, you will likely have to wait longer for embryos and perhaps will not be matched within the time period you hope to become pregnant. Please contact our office if you are interested in adopting as a single mother to discuss your specific situation.

The Legality of Embryo Adoption

What legal processes are followed with embryo adoption?

The adoption agreement and relinquishment forms are legal contracts between the two families. Currently, applicable law is property law, not adoption law. Snowflakes contracts have been successfully used for nearly 20 years and are updated regularly to reflect current laws and circumstances. The contract covers the transfer of property and includes additional adoption language. These legal forms are signed and executed prior to the embryos being shipped to your clinic and before the embryos are transferred into the adoptive mother's womb. Once the adoptive mother gives birth, her name and her husband's names will be listed on the birth certificate as the mother and father. If the adoptive family has chosen to use a gestational

carrier, their assisted reproductive technology (ART) attorney will assist them in completing any additional legal requirements to ensure they are recognized as the child's parents.

How is embryo adoption different from traditional adoption concerning risk?

Genetic parents and traditional birthparents are in very different situations. A woman placing her born child for adoption may be unprepared for the emotions she will feel upon her child's birth and therefore may change her mind and choose to parent her baby. In an embryo adoption, the genetic parents are typically more mature, have an established family with children born from this set of embryos, understand the demands of parenting a child or children and are purposefully choosing to give their remaining embryos the opportunity to be born through placement with an adopting family.

Our experience indicates that if the genetic family has doubts about placing their embryos, they will place their file on hold before ever being matched with an adoptive family. Once they are matched, the placing family transfers their ownership rights by signing a relinquishment prior to the embryos being shipped to your clinic. The placing parents have 3 business days from the date they sign the relinquishment in which to change their minds and notify the agency. In our years of placing embryos, this has never happened.

Under what circumstances can the placing family's relinquishment be revoked?

When you sign the contract to adopt the embryos, you become their legal owners with the understanding that you will use those embryos for attempts at family building. If after one year, your family has not scheduled your first frozen embryo transfer (FET), or had any transfers performed, the genetic family has the option to revoke the contract and place their embryos with a different adopting family who plans to transfer the embryos in a timelier manner. If unforeseen life or medical circumstances cause a delay in your ability to schedule a transfer, this period of one year may be extended with the genetic family's approval.

If you have remaining embryos which you do not plan to use in a frozen embryo transfer pregnancy attempt, the ownership of the embryos will be returned to the genetic family for placement with another adopting family.

After a child is born through this process, can the placing family ever change their mind and get legal custody?

Absolutely not. The law in the U.S. states the woman who gives birth to a child is the legal mother and the man to whom she is married is the legal father. Your names are placed on the birth certificate as the legal parents. We have never in the history of the program had a placing family take action to gain custody of a child born as a result of their embryo donation.

The Embryo Adoption Process

What are the basic steps involved in adopting embryos?

Application Phase

In the application phase you will complete your application, agency agreements, a home study, and your family profile. You will also provide paperwork completed by your clinic verifying your ability to carry and providing Snowflakes with information about the kinds of embryos your clinic is willing to receive on your behalf.

Matching Consultation

One of our staff contacts you to discuss your preferences for the match.

Matching Phase

We set to work to find a match for you based on both your criteria and the criteria of the genetic family. Your profile is sent to a genetic family. If they select you, you receive their Family Profile, medical health history, and embryo information for consideration. We will also send the embryology report to your fertility doctor for review.

Contract Phase

The Embryo Adoption Agreement is signed and notarized designating the adoption of the embryos from the family you have selected.

Travel

Snowflakes schedules a travel date for your embryos and they will be sent to your fertility clinic. Alternatively, if you are traveling to your embryos, your travel arrangements can be made at this time.

Frozen Embryo Transfer (FET)

Once the embryos arrive at your clinic you will begin preparing for the frozen embryo transfer. If all goes well about 9 months later you will be giving birth to your adopted child.

May our home study be used for a domestic adoption if we determine that we are not going to become pregnant?

Yes, with the completed home study you are in the position to look at domestic adoption once you determine that you have completed the embryo adoption process. To adopt a child domestically or internationally you will likely need an additional educational component. Discuss this option with your social worker while you are in the home study process.

The Matching Process

How are genetic and adopting families matched?

It is a mutual selection matching process. Both genetic and adopting families provide Nightlight with information about themselves and indicate what type of family they are looking for. The genetic family indicates their preferences for the following: adoptive family's age, length of marriage, number of children, income, work/childcare plans, religion, prior marriages, and ethnicity as well as their desire for future contact. When we have an adopting family on file

who matches those criteria, their Family Profile is sent to the genetic family for consideration/selection. If the adopting family is selected by the genetic family, the genetic family's Family Profile and medical information are sent to the adopting family for consideration/selection.

What information do we receive on the genetic family?

Adoptive parents receive a Family Profile including some autobiographical information and generally a few pictures. You also receive three generations of medical health history on the genetic family, as well as information about the embryos. If an egg donor or sperm donor was used, you will receive any information the genetic parents received when they selected their donor. This may include autobiographical information, health information, and possibly pictures. While doctors may suggest you seek a certain grade/stage of embryo to adopt, we have seen embryos deemed "excellent" not achieve pregnancy, and embryos deemed "poor quality" born nine months later as healthy babies. The embryo grade and quality cannot guarantee or prevent a pregnancy. Your doctor and embryologist will receive the information about the embryos and their stage of development, so they know how to adequately culture and care for them during your frozen embryo transfer.

Does this type of adoption have to be open adoption?

Open adoption encompasses a wide spectrum of contact. It does not mean that you meet, exchange last names or other identifying information, but does mean that generally families select each other through a letter, biographies, and photos. In most cases you will know each other's first names and state of residence. This information is shared at a minimum to give you enough information to protect children from meeting and marrying. By virtue of having this information about the other family, all our adoptions are considered open. Whether you want more contact (via e-mail, phone, photos or letters, sent either directly or through the agency) or less contact, we will match you with a like-minded family. If a genetic family elects for Nightlight to choose the adoptive family for them and does not want any contact we will match them with an adoptive family who will be comfortable handling that type of situation. You may also want to look into adoption support groups in your area or go online to talk to families who are currently in an open adoption, as most couples are apprehensive when considering open adoption and become more comfortable as they become educated about what it means to your child, your family and your child's genetic family. You may also choose to be connected with someone who has been through embryo adoption and is willing to talk with other families about their experiences. If you are interested in this option, please contact our office.

Why choose open adoption?

The purpose of open adoption is to provide security for your child as they grow and begin to ask questions about their heritage and genetic origins. It provides answers for them, minimizing their loss of relationships by maintaining and celebrating their connections with all the important people in his or her life (especially in an embryo adoption where your child likely has

full genetic siblings). It also serves to provide comfort and encourage the genetic family with the knowledge that they have chosen a family for their embryos and will know the outcome of the adoption, including the peace that comes with knowing the child is happy and thriving; enjoying the life they hoped and prayed for.

Open adoption also empowers you in raising your child, by providing knowledge about your child's genetic family and their family medical history. During the home study, you will learn of the many positive aspects of open adoption and your social worker will discuss with you the contact arrangement you are most comfortable with. It is very important that you be honest and open with your social worker about the type of relationship you envision with your genetic family throughout the adoption and transfer process, after your child is born and throughout your child's life.

May we be on a traditional adoption list AND work with embryo adoption?

No. While we understand your desire to bring home a baby as soon as possible, once you are ready to be matched with a genetic family, we require that you work with only one adoption program. At that point you need to be ready to commit to the genetic family (or birthparents) you are matched with.

How is embryo adoption different from traditional adoption concerning risk?

Genetic parents differ from a "typical" traditional birthparent in several ways. A woman placing her born child for adoption may be unprepared for the emotions she will feel upon her child's birth and therefore may choose to parent her baby. In an embryo adoption the genetic parents are typically older, have a family, have been through the infertility process, understand the demands of parenting a child or children and fully understand that they cannot emotionally and/or financially add additional children to their family. Most genetic families have had time to contemplate their options while their embryos are in storage before they contact us.

Is there any risk that the genetic parents might change their minds?

There is no more risk than with any other adoption. In fact, our experience indicates that if they have doubts they will place their file on hold before ever being matched with an adoptive family. Once they are matched, the genetic family transfers their ownership rights by signing a relinquishment prior to the embryos being shipped to your clinic. The genetic family has three business days from the date they sign the relinquishment in which to change their minds and notify the agency. In our years of placing embryos, this has never happened.

Approximately how long does it take to get matched and get to the travel stage?

- Application package usually takes 2-4 months to complete and submit, depending on time required for your home study. Matching wait is usually 1-4 months. The more open you are, the less time you will wait.
- Legal document notarization and embryo travel coordination usually takes 2-6 months.

- In total, it can be between 5-13 months before the embryos travel to your clinic. Each adoption is unique! You will have a special story to share with your child or children!

How many embryos will we be matched with in total?

You will adopt all of the embryos that a genetic family has. You might be matched with a genetic family who has two or three embryos, or you might be matched with a family who has ten or twelve. Most frequently genetic families have two, three, or four embryos to place for adoption. These may sound like small numbers, but with increased technology for freezing and thawing, more embryos are surviving the thaw process to be transferred. There is no maximum number of embryos a couple can adopt; you will adopt all the embryos a genetic family has to place. When a baby is born, the adoption is complete. For example, if you are matched with a family with three embryos, become pregnant and deliver a baby (or two or three) your adoption would be complete, and you would be able to adopt more embryos through a new adoption after your baby was home with you for nine months. (See Post Adoption section) Re-matching for \$2,000 is an option for couples who do not have a baby through their initial match. *Please note: You must notify us that you want to be matched with your next genetic family within at least 12 months of your last frozen embryo transfer or your file will be closed due to inactivity.*

Can the Adoptive Family specify an embryo gender to adopt?

No. Each of the embryos in our program is equally important and therefore we do not require that they undergo the genetic testing necessary to determine the sex of the embryo. Therefore, just like in other pregnancies you will be "surprised" with the sex of the baby.

Shipment of the Embryos

Are the embryos stored at and shipped from your facility?

No. We are not an embryo storage facility; we are an adoption agency. The embryos never come to our office but are sent directly to your clinic from your genetic family's clinic or storage facility.

When are the embryos shipped to our clinic?

Embryos are shipped to your clinic after you are matched, the adoption agreement and relinquishments are signed, and we have made sure that all the requirements of the clinic, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and of the state into which they are being transferred have been met.

Can we travel to our embryos?

Most likely, yes! The embryos may have a better chance at survival if they are thawed by the same clinic which initially froze them. If you are interested in traveling to your embryos we can help you explore that option and coordinate with the clinic. Depending on the circumstances,

your Snowflakes Program fees may be reduced by \$1000-\$2000 if you choose to travel to your embryos.

How are the embryos shipped?

The embryos will be shipped via Federal Express in a dry shipper. A dry shipper is a tank cooled with liquid Nitrogen that keeps the embryos safe while traveling.

What if neither clinic has a dry shipper?

Nightlight will arrange for a rental shipper.

Are there any states that place restrictions on the shipping of embryos?

Yes. New York does not allow embryos to be shipped into the state, due to their strict human tissue laws. If you live in New York, we can work with you to adopt embryos, however please contact our office for more information as to how this will affect your adoption.

Frozen Embryo Transfer (FET)

How many embryos may be transferred per cycle?

We require that our families limit the number of embryos transferred to the number that they are willing to carry to term if all the embryos attach. Generally, we encourage families to transfer no more than three (3) embryos.

If we become pregnant with multiples, may we selectively reduce the pregnancy?

No. We specifically require that our adopting families agree not to selectively reduce the number of fetuses that have begun developing. For this reason we recommend not transferring more than three embryos at a time. If our prohibition against selective reduction at any stage, for any reason, makes you uncomfortable, Snowflakes may not be right for you.

What is the success rate for thawing and viability of embryos?

Through Snowflakes, 58% of embryos thawed were viable. However, the success rate for frozen embryo transfer varies by each clinic. The national average overall thaw success rate is 51%. With better freezing and thawing techniques, this percentage is likely to increase. Clinics have reported success rates as high as 80% with embryos thawed by the same clinic which initially froze them.

What is the likelihood of a multiple pregnancy with frozen embryo transfer?

Our understanding is that multiple births are much rarer with frozen embryo cycles than with "fresh" embryo transfers. But this is in no way a guarantee that you will not have multiples. About 1/4 of the Snowflakes moms who have achieved a pregnancy have carried multiples. Please consult ASRM and your fertility clinic for statistics.

What is the success rate of pregnancies among Snowflakes families who have had embryo transfers?

On average, each transfer has about a 45% chance of becoming a successful pregnancy. To date, over 470 children have been born and there are usually 15-25 babies due at any time. There are always families with recent transfers awaiting pregnancy test results and more families scheduling transfers.

Post Adoption

What if we become pregnant and we still have embryos remaining?

We hope your intentions will be to thaw and transfer all the embryos you adopt, over a reasonable period of time, to allow the genetic siblings to stay together if at all possible. However, if unforeseen circumstances result in your inability to carry more children or undergo further transfers, the embryos can be replaced for adoption with a new family. Usually, per the contract you signed, the ownership of the embryos will revert to the placing family and they will choose another adopting family. You are obligated to continuing paying for embryo storage until a secondary match is completed.

How can we adopt more embryos after we have our first baby?

After you have a baby (or babies) and you want to continue building your family through embryo adoption you can update your home study and your family profile to include your new child(ren) and send in a new application. Please wait nine months after the birth of your child(ren) before updating your home study and profile. This is to give adequate time for bonding and family adjustment before putting your energies into a new adoption. A \$500 discount will be given to returning clients.

What if we do not become pregnant?

If you do not achieve a pregnancy and give birth to your child(ren) after thawing and/or transferring all of the embryos you adopted from your match you can choose to be matched with a new genetic family for \$2,000. If none of your embryos survive after being thawed, Snowflakes will rematch you without additional fees. Alternatively, you may use/update your home study to pursue a domestic or international adoption.

How many post adoption reports are required after the birth of our child(ren)?

We require that your home study agency complete one post adoption report six weeks after your baby comes home. In addition, we require that you provide us with pictures and updates of your child(ren) three additional times during the first year, and once a year thereafter. This correspondence should be separate from the information you share with your genetic family and serves as our way of knowing your child is healthy and happy, and can help us identify and provide you with any additional services or referrals, as needed.

How do we tell our child(ren) of his/her unique conception, adoption and birth?

"We adopted you as an embryo, which is a teeny baby, and the doctor put you in mommy's womb!" is a pretty good start. There are two great books available: [Our Wish for A Baby](#) by Janice Grimes and [Hope and Will Have A Baby](#) by Ir n  Celcer. Be sure to get the embryo donation/adoption versions! Snowflakes also has two versions of an embryo adoption "lifebook" which you can customize to reflect your child's unique story. Additionally, one of our Snowflakes families has created a book and ordered through [Pint Size Productions](#). There are versions for one child or two children. Let Snowflakes know if you are interested in ordering one! When your child is born we will send you information about how to talk with your children about how they came to be a part of your family. Overall, honesty and openness with your children from the very beginning is the best approach, as it helps create trust and a positive, comfortable atmosphere around their adoption. It also allows you to begin open communication with your child so s/he will feel comfortable directly talking to you and asking you questions about anything in life, not only adoption. If at any time you have questions about your child's genetic family, and you are not in direct contact with them, we are always here to be a liaison for you.

Program Fees

What would you estimate the entire cost for the adoption to be?

Snowflakes Program fee: \$8,000, Home study agency fee: \$2,000-3,000

Fertility clinic frozen embryo transfer fees: \$3,500-6,000

TOTAL FEES: \$13,500-17,000

A full accounting of the program expenses for Snowflakes will be provided each month there is activity.

What additional out-of-pocket expenses can we expect?

You may also have additional expenses involved in completing your homestudy (approx. \$500, for fingerprinting, medicals, DMV records, CPR/First Aid classes, etc.) and clinic fees for any subsequent FETs. Check with your home study agency and clinic for an estimate of these fees. If re-matching is requested, the fee is \$2,000.

What does the program fee cover?

Genetic parent outreach and screening, providing counseling for all parties (and outside counseling referrals, if requested), matching services between genetic and adoptive parents, facilitating communication between genetic and adopting families, preparing contracts, relinquishments and other legal paperwork, facilitating consent and release forms if required by clinics prior to releasing embryos, facilitating communication between clinics and doctors to ensure that requirements are met for the transfer of the embryos between states, obtaining

necessary laboratory tests for the genetic family, coordinating travel of the embryos, shipping fees, maintaining files, providing post-adoption support and supervision and cooperation in the court finalization process (if required by your state). Medical expenses involved in the FET are not included.

Does the program fee include any of our medical expenses?

No. You will need to pay the fertility clinic to thaw and transfer the embryos. Since medical expenses vary by provider, we encourage you to research clinics in your area. We have heard recent quotes from \$3,000-6,000 for a frozen embryo transfer attempt. This may or may not include any necessary medications needed to prepare the adoptive mother's body for the embryo transfer and the costs of any subsequent transfers.

Is the frozen embryo transfer (FET) covered by medical insurance?

If your insurance covers infertility treatments, many of the expenses such as medications, hormone treatments and the transfer may be covered. We strongly encourage you to contact your insurance provider and find out what specific expenses, if any, they may cover.

What are the costs to the genetic parents?

There are no agency or program fees for the genetic parents to place their embryos for adoption.

Is the genetic family reimbursed any of their infertility treatment costs?

No. You do not pick up any costs prior to being matched with a genetic family. As with a traditional domestic adoption, where only expenses directly related to the pregnancy may be covered, in embryo adoption only expenses related to the adoption and transport of the embryos may be covered. You are only responsible for the cost of any blood work the genetic family must have performed which is necessary to ship the embryos to your clinic and shipping fees and these will be covered by your program fees.

Do we help pay for any of the storage fees owed by the genetic parents?

No.

Does Embryo Adoption qualify for the Adoption Tax Credit?

The Hope for Children Act provides a tax credit per adopted child for families with combined incomes less than a certain amount. Since embryo adoption is not specifically included, we advise you to contact your tax preparer or the Internal Revenue Service directly to find out what expenses may qualify. Please see [funding your adoption](#) for more information.

Is there any financial assistance available for Embryo Adoption?

We suggest you look into the following adoption assistance programs:

- **Adoption Bridge** AdoptionBridge is a crowd-funding website where you can tell your adoption story, post pictures, videos, and keep people informed about your adoption journey. All donations from your friends and family are tax deductible and funds raised are sent to Nightlight towards your adoption process.
- **Employee Benefits**
- **Adoption Grants, Loans and other forms of financial assistance**
Various organizations offer financial assistance to adoptive families via adoption grants, loans or other assistance. Please contact each organization to find out about their services and what their qualifications and requirements are. For more details about these types of financial assistance, please visit the [Funding section of our website](#).

Questions Regarding Clinics

How do I find a clinic that will work within the parameters of Snowflakes?

Ask your current fertility clinic if they are willing to receive embryos from another clinic and perform a frozen embryo transfer (FET), or research clinics in your area that report to the American Society for Reproductive Medicine (ASRM). Although we cannot recommend any specific clinic, if any Snowflakes families have worked with a clinic in your area we will provide you with the clinic's contact information. You would need to research and verify any clinic's success and/or medical expertise. Also, if the clinic worked with a genetic family you will need to ask them if they are willing to work with an adopting family in the Snowflakes Embryo Adoption Program.

What should we ask when we are looking for a fertility clinic to help us with the medical portion of the program?

Ask the clinic how much it would cost for an "FET," or frozen embryo transfer. Also ask if they are willing to accept embryos from another clinic. You may have to educate them about Snowflakes. We would be happy to send a package of information on the program to any doctors you are talking to about providing the frozen embryo transfer. We have found a local clinic that has agreed to receive frozen embryos from other clinics. However, they insist that the genetic family follow FDA guidelines regarding blood work.

Does Nightlight handle the coordination of FDA Regulations?

Yes. We will communicate with your fertility clinic to ensure FDA regulations for lab work and donor screening are met by the genetic parents.

What are the current requirements of the FDA for blood tests?

The current FDA required blood tests include:

1. HIV 1 and 2
2. HTLV I/II

3. Hepatitis B surface antigen
4. Hepatitis B Core Antibody (IgG/IgM)
5. Hepatitis C Antibody
6. RPR (Syphilis)
7. CMV IgG/IgM
8. HIV/HCV/HBV NAT
9. Gonorrhea/Chlamydia culture
10. Blood typing
11. Rh factor

Questions for Donors

Why would we donate through an embryo adoption program instead of a clinic embryo donation program?

Snowflakes® provides the same safeguards that the traditional adoption process offers. You will know that the family you have chosen to parent your pre-born child(ren) has been screened for a criminal history and child abuse record, as well as received education about how to parent an adoptee. You have the peace of mind of having handpicked a family to raise your genetic child. You also have the opportunity to have contact with your adopting family to whatever extent you both are comfortable.

Does Nightlight encourage the creation and freezing of embryos?

No, we are trying to provide a loving option to the families of the over 600,000 (estimated) embryos frozen in clinics throughout the United States.

What are the legal issues with embryo adoption?

The adoption agreement and relinquishment forms are legal contracts between the two families. As there are no laws regarding adoption of embryos, we have created the contract to match the current position of the courts that the embryos are property. The contract covers the transfer of property and also includes additional adoption language. These legal forms are signed and executed prior to the embryos being shipped to the adoptive parents' clinic and before the embryos are implanted in the adoptive mother.

Does the age of the embryos (date frozen) affect our ability to place them for adoption?

No, there have been no definitive studies proving how long embryos can stay frozen and remain viable. We have had successful pregnancies with embryos frozen for 10 years. We believe each embryo, no matter its age, is a precious life that should be given the opportunity to grow.

Questions for Medical Professionals

Does Snowflakes comply with FDA regulations?

Yes, once a genetic/donor family is matched with an adoptive family, we work directly with the genetic/donor family to ensure all FDA required testing and screening is completed.

Who pays for the genetic/donor family's required testing and screening?

The Snowflakes Program pays for routine FDA required testing and screening after a genetic/donor family has been matched with an adoptive family.

Where are the embryos stored while the genetic/donor family is finding an adoptive couple? Who pays for that storage?

The embryos remain stored at their original IVF clinic or at a long term storage facility designated by the genetic/donor family during the adoption process. The genetic family pays for storage during this time.

Are the genetic/donor parents reimbursed after they place their embryos for adoption?

Genetic/donor parents are not reimbursed for the cost of their IVF treatment or the cost of the storage fees during their adoption.

Who handles the legal contracts between the families?

Snowflakes provides a legal contract for both families to sign. The genetic/donor family relinquishes the rights to the embryos and the adoptive family assumes ownership and rights to embryos. A copy of this contract can be provided to the fertility specialist at his or her request.

I've heard you only do open adoptions, what does that mean?

Almost all of Snowflakes' adoptions are considered open because the genetic/donor family and the adoptive family both choose each other via pictures and letters sent through the mail. Any ongoing correspondence between the families after that is up to each individual family. We work hard to match families together according to their desire to remain in contact with one another. If a genetic/donor family wishes to remain anonymous, we will tailor our program to meet their needs.