

Creating Babies

Sexual Health Victoria (SHV) acknowledges that everybody is different and people have unique experiences of sex, gender or gender expression.

Note that babies can be born with variations to sexual and reproductive anatomy and chromosomes. People with variations to chromosomes, hormones or reproductive anatomy are known as intersex.

This resource can be used as a guide to begin education about reproduction.



Conception

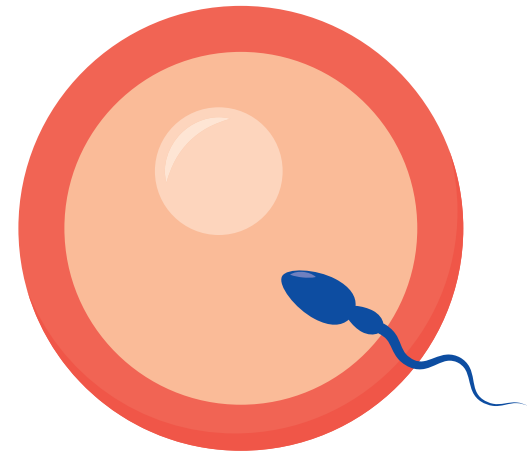
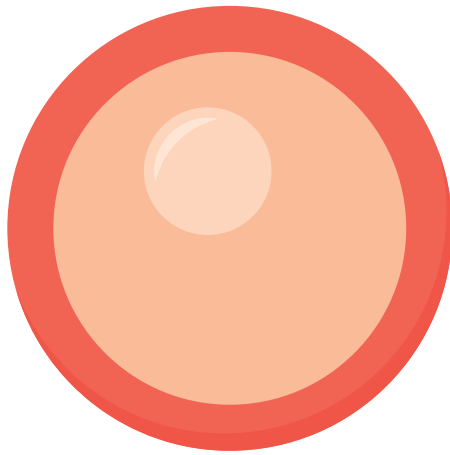
1 Egg (ovum)

+

1 Sperm

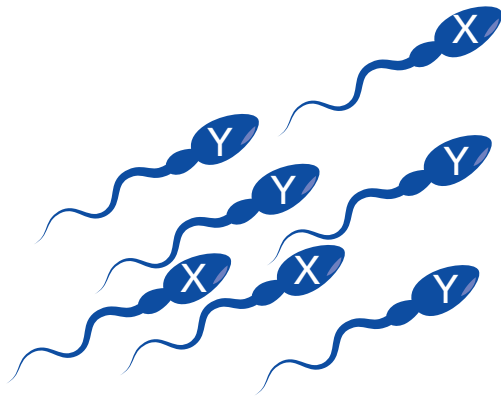
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Zygote (fertilised egg)

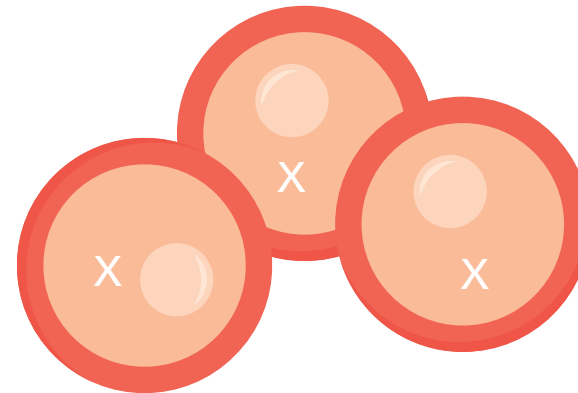


embryo → foetus → baby

Typical Male and Female Sex Cells

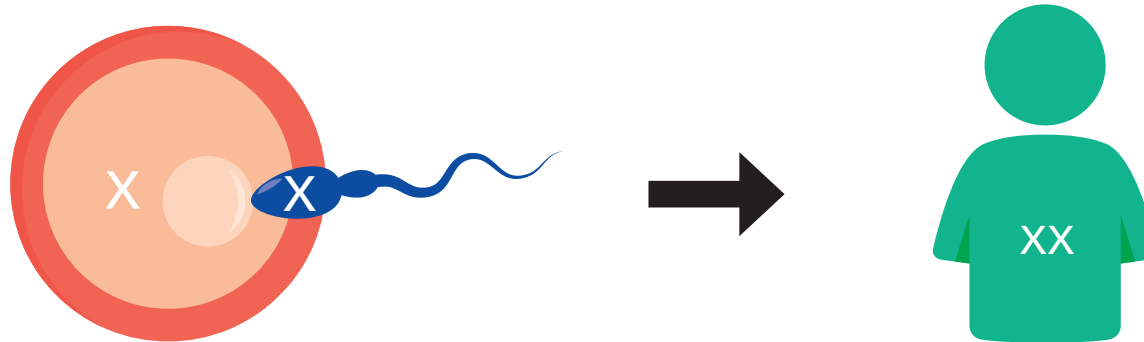


Male bodies typically have cells that are XY.
Sperm cells are either X or Y.

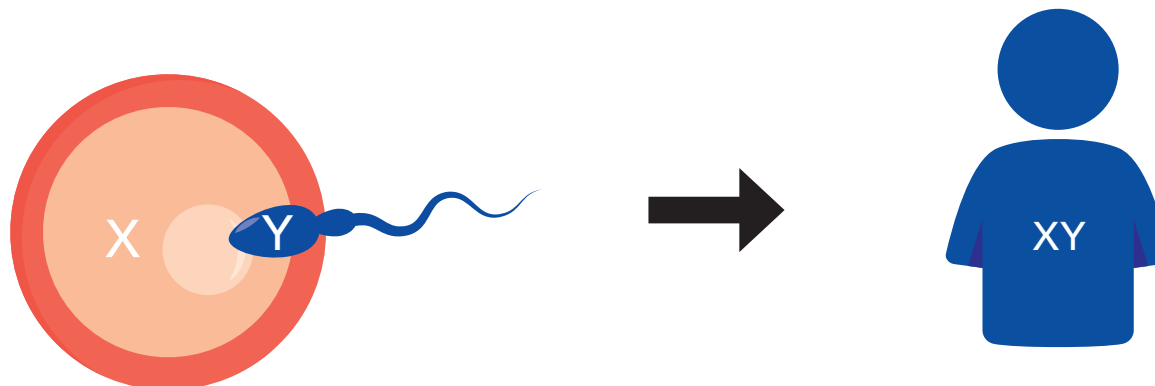


Female bodies typically have cells that are XX.
Eggs cells are always X.

Sex Selection



If an X egg and an X sperm join together, the baby will be XX and probably be assigned female at birth by a doctor.

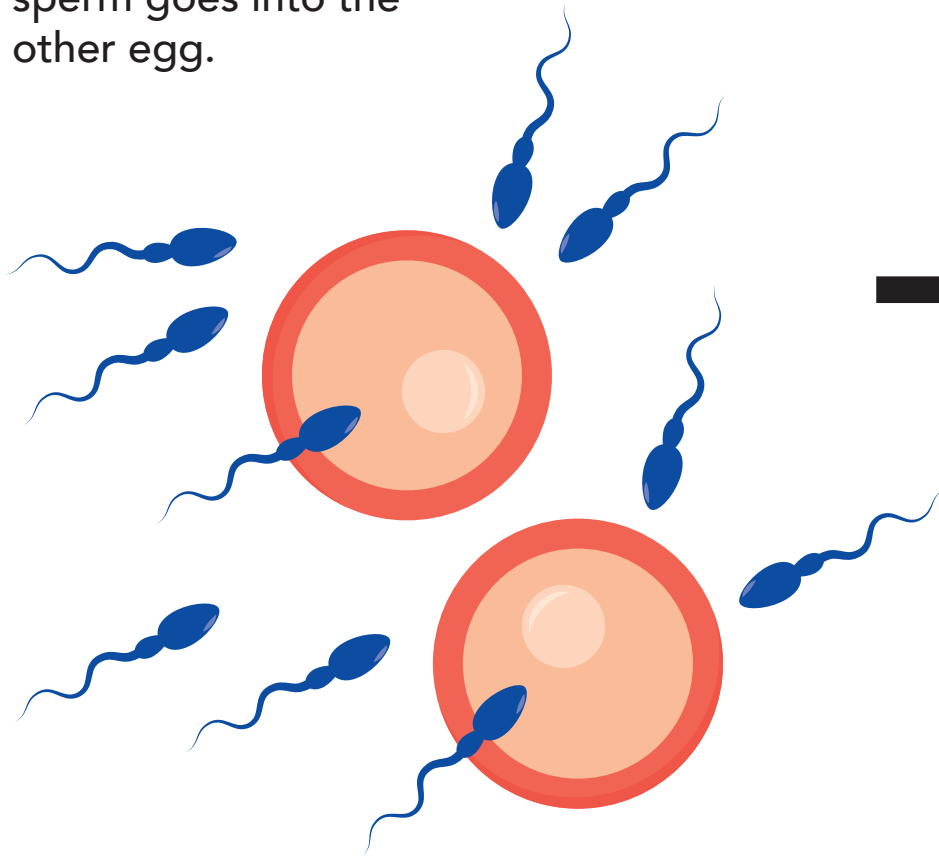


If an X egg and a Y sperm join together, the baby will be XY and probably be assigned male at birth by a doctor.

Non-Identical Twins

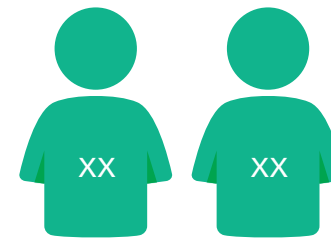
2 Eggs + sperm

One sperm goes into one egg and another sperm goes into the other egg.

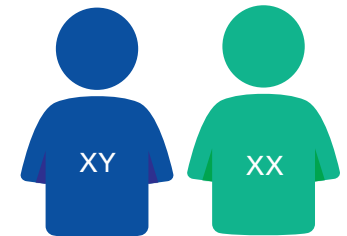


Each fertilised egg can become a baby, because they were made from different sperm and eggs, they won't be identical.

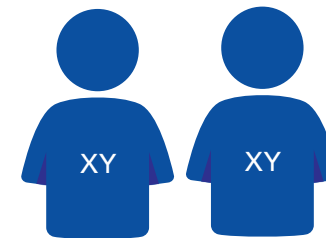
They might be ...



2 female babies



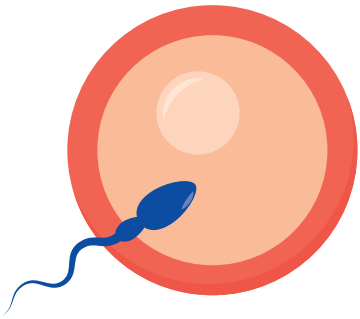
a male and a female baby



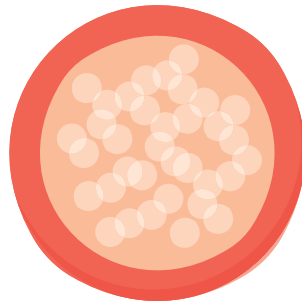
2 male babies

Identical Twins

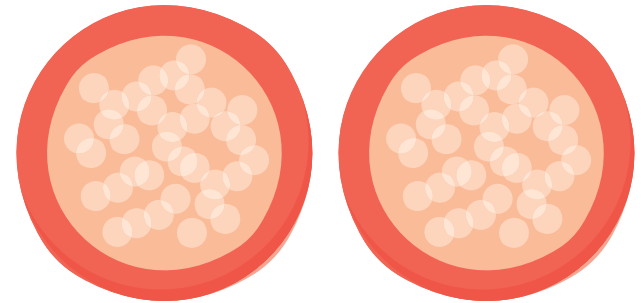
1 egg and 1 sperm



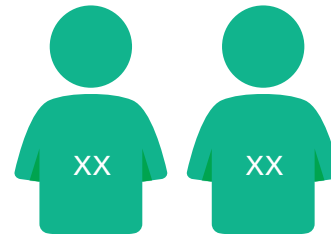
1 bundle of cells



It splits into two bundles

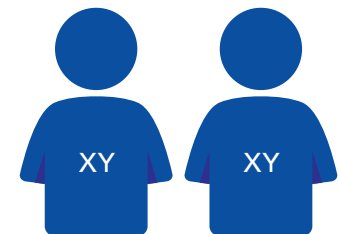


Because they were made from the same sperm and egg, they will be identical.



2 female babies

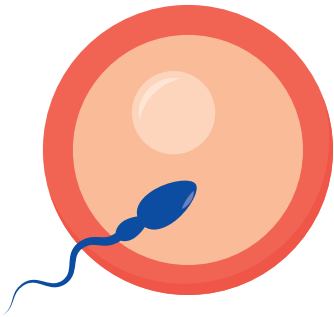
or



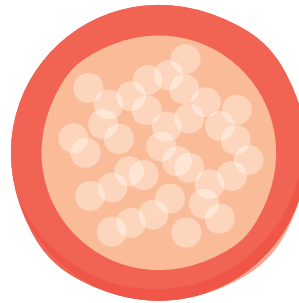
2 male babies

Conjoined Twins

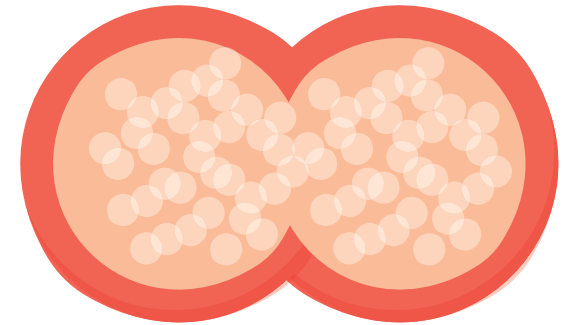
1 egg and 1 sperm



1 bundle of cells



The bundle splits,
but not completely.



They will develop as
identical twins that are
joined. The place where
they are joined will vary.

Donating Eggs

Person 1



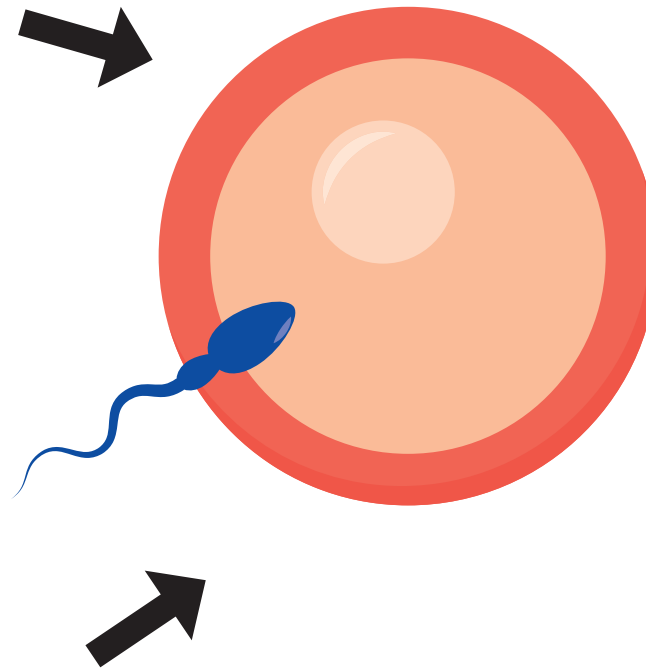
Is born with testicles which make healthy sperm when they are adult. This can be used to fertilise an egg.

Person 2



Is born with ovaries and has healthy eggs. Adults can choose to donate their eggs.

Assisted
reproduction



Put inside the
uterus to grow

Person 3



Is born with a uterus, but has no healthy eggs in their body to use. They can use their uterus to grow a baby after a doctor has joined the egg and sperm from person 1 & 2.

Donating Sperm

Person 1



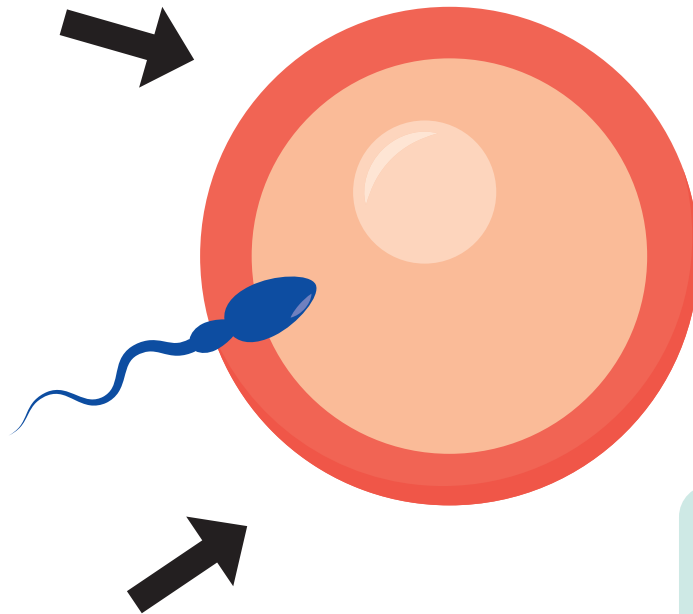
Has no sperm or no healthy sperm.

Person 2



Is born with testicles which make healthy sperm when they become an adult. They can use this sperm to donate to person 1 & 3 to help them start a baby.

Assisted
reproduction



Put inside the
uterus to grow

Person 3

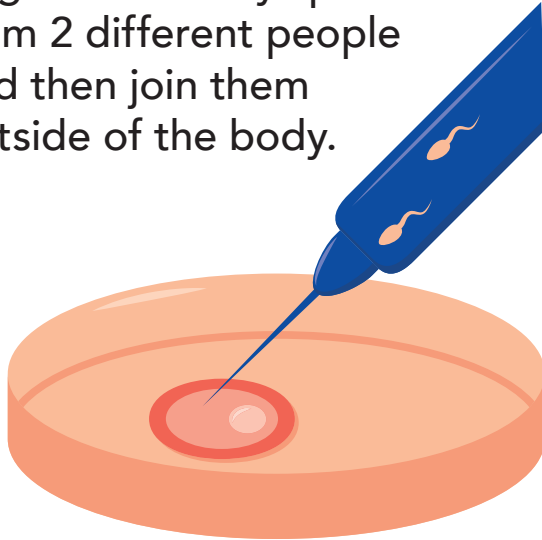


Is born with ovaries and a uterus. They have healthy eggs which can be used to join with sperm from person 2. Then they grow the baby in their uterus.

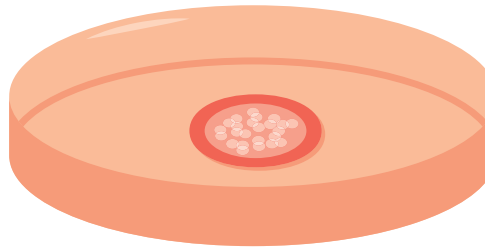
Sometimes the healthy sperm can be put into the body of person 3 through the vagina so the sperm can find the egg (insemination).
Sometimes a doctor joins the sperm and egg outside the body (In Vitro Fertilisation).

In Vitro Fertilisation

When a person is having problems getting pregnant a doctor can take healthy eggs and healthy sperm from 2 different people and then join them outside of the body.



After fertilisation the bundle of cells (zygote) can be put inside the uterus of the person wanting to become pregnant.



This process is sometimes used between opposite sex couples, single people and same sex couples.



Surrogacy

A surrogate is an adult with a uterus who volunteers to grow a baby for other people. A doctor joins an egg and sperm from different people to the surrogate uterus puts the fertilised egg (zygote) into the surrogate's uterus to grow.

When the baby is born, the people who arranged the surrogacy care for the baby.

Glossary

Assisted Reproductive Technology (ART) Includes a range of reproductive technologies that can be used to increase chances of getting pregnant.

Conception The fertilisation of an egg by a sperm, which is followed by implantation into the uterus.

Donate (medical) To allow sperm or eggs to be taken from one person's body and used in fertility treatments for other people.

Donor A person who voluntarily gives sperm, eggs, blood, skin etc. to use in the treatment of another person.

Embryo The very early stages of development (weeks three to eight) after an egg is fertilised by a sperm

Fertilise The joining of an egg and a sperm.

Fertility The ability to conceive (have a baby).

Foetus The foetal stage starts eight weeks after the egg has been fertilised. This stage continues until birth.

Gender A range of characteristics that distinguish between male/masculinity and female/femininity.

Implantation A process that happens early in pregnancy, where the embryo sticks to the wall of the uterus.

Insemination The introduction of semen into the vagina. This can happen through penis in vagina sex or through use of an instrument such as a syringe in a process called artificial insemination.

In Vitro Fertilisation (IVF) A type of reproductive technology where an egg and sperm are joined outside of the body by a doctor. When the zygote has developed it is put into the uterus where it implants and a pregnancy can continue.

Ovulation The process that happens in most women or people born with ovaries, where a mature egg is released from the ovary as part of the menstrual cycle.

Reproduction The process of making babies.

Sex Can refer to the sexual and reproductive anatomy of a person. Can also refer to sexual intercourse.

Surrogate A person who agrees to become pregnant and carry a pregnancy for another person or couple, who will then become the baby's legal parents.

Uterus (womb) A hollow, muscular organ where the fertilised egg implants and develops.

Zygote After an egg is fertilised by a sperm, the one-celled organism that results is called a zygote. The zygote starts a two week period of rapid cell division called mitosis where each cell doubles by dividing into two cells. This two week stage is called the germinal period and spans the time of conception to the implantation of the embryo into the uterus.