

SHAPE

"Bachelor" Winner Whitney Bischoff Talks Egg Freezing

We chatted with the fertility nurse about freezing her eggs and how to take control of your own fertility (and yes, her future with Chris!)



We were pretty much team Whitney from the get go, in part because she was so darn passionate about her career as a fertility nurse (somewhat of a rarity from a franchise known for selecting women with jobs like "sports fishing enthusiast," "dog lover," and "free spirit."). She even took *Bachelor* Chris Soules to the clinic where she works, [Aparent IVF](#), on her hometown date! With egg freezing on the rise, we chatted with Bischoff about her decision to freeze her own eggs as an "insurance policy," and tapped

Colleen Coughlin, embryologist and director of Aparent IVF, for some additional expertise. Read on to find out what you need to know about taking control of your fertility from the future Mrs. Chris Soules! (Plus, see these [seven important things to know](#) about egg freezing.)

Shape: What made you want to help make babies for a living?

Whitney Bischoff [WB]: I've always known that I wanted to be a mom. As a fertility nurse, I have the opportunity every day to pair my education as a nurse and my passion of wanting to be a mother myself by helping others fulfill that dream. I always knew I wanted to be a nurse and I did a lot of searching as I went through school and looked into different areas and quickly learned this facet would be a good fit for me. I just love it. It's ever-changing; it's such an up-and-coming field of medicine.

Shape: You talked recently about how you had your own eggs frozen (two years ago) at 27. What was your thought process leading up to the decision?

WB: I did it because I've had the opportunity to work in all aspects of fertility, I've worked with the basic infertile couple, but I've also worked with more extreme cases where patients have had to use a third party egg donor. Something I heard a lot of people say was, "I wish I had known. I wish that someone would have told me I had the option to freeze my eggs." That to me

was a lightbulb going off in my head. I really wanted to be proactive for my own health and be in control of my own fertility. It's really helpful that I've walked the talk and as a nurse that I can tell my patients I've been on the other side. It's helpful in explaining the process, I can answer their questions through my own personal experience, and I also think that it's helpful in terms of understanding what they've been through.

Shape: What is your plan for your frozen eggs now that you've met Chris and are ready to start a family together?

WB: For me, it was an insurance policy; it was about a peace of mind. The hope is that you don't have to do use them (and can conceive naturally). But it's nice to know that they're there if you need them. If I don't use them, or if a patient doesn't use them, they can either donate them to research, donate them to another couple, or discard them. I plan to leave mine in storage.

Colleen Coughlin [CC]: The beauty of having eggs frozen is that the pressure comes off. It's amazing that couples together can make their final decision and build their families when they're ready, not because biology has stopped them. I really truly don't think that the big benefit of having eggs frozen is for baby number one. The statistics show many women will get married in time to have baby number one if they choose, but that's not the biggest hurdle. The bigger hurdle is secondary infertility. Additionally, if a patient ends up having a sick child that might need some kind of donation from another sibling, those healthy frozen eggs could be potential matches. The \$500 (to keep the eggs in storage) is an insurance policy that's well worth it until you know all the options that might come up.

Shape: What are women your age most surprised to learn about egg freezing?

WB: My friends ask me a lot of questions and the thing they're most surprised about is just how simple it can be. When you dissect the aspects of it, they're able to grasp it and get their head around it. It's important to get the word out there about what egg freezing is because it's really going to be a game changer. The best time to freeze your eggs is between the ages of 25 to 35. Your eggs then are the healthiest and youngest they'll ever be. They will literally be frozen in time. At 25 or 27, someone may think "I can't afford it" or "infertility will never happen to me," but you never know what life is going to throw your way. Now is the best time to do it. If you're thinking about it, be proactive. Go talk to someone about it and learn your options. Education is power. The more women learn about their options, the better decision they'll be able to make.

Shape: Did you talk to any of the women on the *Bachelor* about it?

WB: There was so much going on on the show, but there were a couple nights when we talked about it and I do think I got a couple people on board to freeze their eggs!

Shape: What does a normal day as a fertility nurse look like for you? What's it like now that you are in LA with Chris for *Dancing with the Stars*? Will that change when you move to Arlington?

WB: Each day is different, and that's what makes it so exciting. But when you get down to it, a day consists of educating patients, answering their questions, and being their advocate and friend. It's about helping them achieve their dream. Before I left for the show, I was working with third-party patients (patients that are utilizing an egg donor or gestational surrogate) and now I'm working with egg vitrification patients (patients going through the egg freezing process). I'm able to do that remotely—for example, demonstrating how to do injections over Skype. Technology is amazing! I'm passionate about it and don't plan on leaving the field at all, and I definitely don't plan on leaving Aparent IVF. I've been trained by the best and am fortunate enough to be given this opportunity to work remotely, even from Arlington. There will be a bit of commuting back and forth to Chicago as needed.

CC: It's all about finding the right person, and you look for anything you can do to retain a good person. We're not letting Whitney get away from us no matter what comes next!