



## Embryo Remains Burial

*They were so small that they could barely be seen.  
And even though their lives were brief, your heart  
was filled with hopes and dreams for their future.*

*Burying your deceased embryos is an act of love  
which honors their memory and gives them  
a beautiful, lasting place in this world.*



Tell your IVF clinic that you would like embryos who die in the lab to be buried.

- Your lab will ship the remains to Sacred Heart Guardians & Shelter (SHG). Remains are kept at a licensed funeral home until burial.
- **A communal burial service is held quarterly at a Roman Catholic cemetery (St. Paul, MN). We gladly serve people of all faiths.**
- Documentation, including grave site location, is mailed to the clinic (or patient, if authorized).
- No patient-identifying information is needed.
- SHG's remains burial is offered free of cost.



Sacred Heart *Guardians & Shelter*

3432 Denmark Ave. #253. Eagan, MN 55123  
612-578-0377

info@sacredheartguardians.org  
www.sacredheartguardians.org

## Instructions: complete and give to your IVF clinic.

YES, I/we authorize \_\_\_\_\_ (Clinic) and its ART lab to send any deceased embryo(s) ("remains") resulting from my/our IVF or FET procedure(s) to Sacred Heart Guardians and Shelter (SHG) for burial.

Yes, Clinic may provide SHG with our contact information.\*

No, Clinic may not provide SHG with our contact information.

NO, do not send embryonic remains to SHG for burial.

Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

*\*SHG uses this information for the sole purpose of mailing documentation (service program, cemetery location) to the patient(s). Otherwise, patient(s) may retrieve this information from their clinic.*

## Frequently Asked Questions

### 1. Why burial?

An embryo (aka fertilized egg, pre-embryo, 2PN, zygote, blastocyst) is a human being in his or her earliest stage of development. If it dies, burial is an appropriate and dignified way to handle its remains.

### 2. Which embryos can be buried?

SHG facilitates burial for all embryos, fresh or frozen, who die in the ART (i.e., IVF) laboratory. Cause of death may include:

- Spontaneous self-arrest after fertilization.
- Discard per grade, PGD or PGS result.
- Failure to survive a freeze or thaw process.
- Patient-elected thaw without transfer. Please note that some clinics do not allow this action, or may engage a 3rd party company to manage frozen embryos.

 **If you have frozen embryos you do not intend to transfer, please do not include burial as a factor in your decision to thaw them. Burial is not a "disposition option" (e.g., donate to research, donate to another person, etc). Rather, it is an honorable way to handle the remains of the embryos after they have died.**

### 3. What does "communal burial" mean?

The remains of your embryos share a common outer burial container with those of other families. No names are used. SHG's burial services are held in conjunction with burials for remains of miscarriages that occurred at several Twin Cities hospitals.