





Burial for Arrested Embryos

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 center that you would like embryos that die ("arrest") in the lab buried by Sacred Heart Guardians and Shelter (SHG). For more about arrested embryos and burial, see reverse: **Frequently Asked Questions**.

 Your IVF center can send arrested embryos to SHG on your behalf, or we can work with you directly.

 **Burials take place quarterly at a Catholic cemetery in Minnesota. We gladly serve people of all faiths.**

 After burial, documentation is mailed to the patient or clinic, as authorized (see reverse).

 We serve the youngest human beings and their families. We charge nothing for this work.

"To know our embryos were shown the utmost respect - thank you! Thank you for acknowledging these lives. The depth of comfort it brings is enormous."



Sacred Heart Guardians and Shelter
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612-578-0377 / info@sacredheartguardians.org
www.sacredheartguardians.org

Instructions: Complete and give to your IVF center.

I/we authorize _____ (Clinic) and its ART lab to send any deceased embryo(s) 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.

Name(s): _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

*SHG uses this information only for the purpose of mailing burial-related documentation to the patient(s). Otherwise, patient(s) may retrieve this information from their clinic.

Frequently Asked Questions


1. Why burial?

An embryo (may also known as a fertilized egg, pre-embryo, zygote, blastocyst, tissue, specimen) is a human being in his or her earliest stage of development. If it dies (i.e., "arrests," "is non-viable," "is discarded"), burial is an appropriate and respectful way to handle the remains.

2. Which embryos can be buried?

SHG facilitates burial for any embryo that dies in the ART (i.e., IVF, embryology) lab during a fresh or frozen cycle. Causes include:

- Spontaneous arrest any time after fertilization.
- Discard per lab grade or genetic testing result.
- Failure to survive freeze or thaw.
- Patient-elected thaw without transfer.

 **If you have frozen embryos you do not intend to transfer, note that burial is not a "disposition option" (i.e., donate to research, donate to another person, thaw and discard). Rather, burial is a respectful way to handle the remains of embryos after they have died, as an alternative to the routine lab practice of medical waste disposal.**

3. More about burial....

Deceased embryos can be sent to SHG at any time, from IVF centers, storage facilities, or patients located in the United States. SHG burials take place near St. Paul, MN four times a year (typically, February, May, August, November). All arrested embryos buried on a particular date share a common burial container and no names are used. A grave marker is inscribed with the burial date and a short passage. Details of the burial, including gravesite ID number, are mailed to the clinic or patient, as indicated above.