



Oregon Reproductive Medicine

ORM DONORS | ORM SURROGACY | ORM GENOMICS

FERTILITY JOURNEYS: DONOR EGG IVF WITH GENOMIC SCREENING... WITH OREGON REPRODUCTIVE MEDICINE

After nearly ten years trying to build their family, Heather & Brandon have started their donor egg IVF treatment with genomic screening at ORM and made their first ever visit to beautiful Portland, Oregon. We follow their initial steps to complete their pre-cycle screening with Dr. Barbieri and to meet the team that will be caring for them.

Heather writes...

Thursday, November 9th, after such a long journey and so many struggles over the past nearly ten years, we were finally boarding our flight to Portland, Oregon to meet with the team at ORM who are caring for us. To be honest, we were cautiously optimistic about this trip, recalling the many false promises and inaccurate diagnoses which have led us to this moment in time. We were full of anxiety and hoping that our trip would not be in vain.

In fact our journey with ORM had already begun before we got on the plane. The months leading-up to our trip have been filled with lots of activity building-up to this visit.

My pre-cycle checks had revealed a fibroid that needed to be taken care of before we could get started. So I had a further hysteroscopy, and after recovering from this surgery my ultrasound showed that the procedure had been successful and all looked good.

We had also had a consultation via Skype with ORM's psychologist to talk through the process of becoming parents through egg donation and to help ensure that we were well prepared emotionally for this journey.

Brandon had completed his genetic family history evaluation and genetic disorder carrier screening for the ORM genetic counsellors. Both of these were part of our being able to select an egg donor that would be a good match from a genetic health perspective.

After much consideration, we'd also found a lovely egg donor in the ORM Donors program who we felt was right for us and who was a good match.

At last we arrived in Portland late on the Thursday evening and checked-in at the Hotel Deluxe, right across the street from ORM. Such an inviting place to arrive after our travels. We reviewed our itinerary of meetings for the following day then slept soundly.

Our first appointment was the following morning on Friday, November 10th. We expected that ORM would be a suite in a larger building. We were surprised to find that an entire three story building was solely dedicated to helping couples like us.

ORM's facilities were beautiful and styled in a contemporary, welcoming fashion with friendly employees at every turn.

We first met with our treatment coordinator, Christina, who has been our constant guide through this journey. She coordinates our correspondence with Dr. Barbieri and the larger ORM team and supports our efforts to connect our fertility center at home with ORM, as well as provides us with helpful advice throughout the process. It was so nice to put a face to our most frequent ORM contact.

We talked with the ORM team about creating a video as part of our Fertility Journey to document our journey to becoming parents. My husband said yes without needing to be convinced. I, on the other hand, needed some words of encouragement.

I will admit that once we got stated, the experience of sharing our intimate story and challenging journey to become parents was freeing. Here I was sharing our story with my husband through video and thinking to myself, "Wow, what a reward if our child is able to see all that we have done and been through to ensure they are a part of this world."

In the afternoon Brandon was up. His sperm collection and freezing took place. The results came back in less than three hours and showed a healthy collection with great counts for quality and





quantity. We were relieved and excited to receive such good news.

We then had a consultation with Christina where she shared the prospective calendar for our donor and a prospective calendar for me. To see these cycle calendars, to see the dates, to see the daily doses, helped us to realise that our reality of becoming parents was starting to take shape.

Christina spoke with us about the medications that would be part of my treatment as well as walked us through the process of administering my daily injections. She carefully explained every medication and detailed the specific quantities that I would be prescribed for the six weeks prior to my embryo transfer.

I then went through the process of performing the regimen for dosages and administering them into a dummy belly to ensure my husband and I understood how to administer the medications required prior to the procedure. Christina explained that our medications would be sent to us to ensure that we had no difficulty getting a hold of the medications required.

Next, we met with Dr. Barbieri for a trial embryo transfer and ultrasound. Dr. Barbieri is so kind and warm. Dr. Barbieri said to us, "You all have been through so much. We are going to do this!"

We discussed with Dr. Barbieri the chances for success, the benefits and disadvantages of performing a single versus a dual embryo transfer, as well as assessed my overall health.

She had encouraging words for me because my health was in good standing. My weight is comparable to my height. My blood pressure and cholesterol are also in good standing. Both the trial transfer and ultrasound went smoothly with great results, which was a relief for me.

Finally, our day concluded with goodbye hugs with Christina and discussions of the next time we would be in touch. We could not ask for better partners in this journey who are solely dedicated to our success story of building our family.

Friday evening, we took in the a little bit of Portland's sites. We very were pleased. Portland is such a relaxed place. Chirstina recommended a great place for dinner. I am obsessed with seafood and after such a wonderful day filled with hope, as a treat, my husband and I agreed that we wanted some to cure our craving for great seafood.

We walked at least 10 to 15 blocks and dined at Jake's Famous Crawfish. We were not disappointed. We also enjoyed the opportunity to visit several small businesses on the streets of Portland and speak with locals about the Portland experience. Our flight left early Saturday morning so we didn't make it a late night.

While our visit was short, it was sweet. We are thankful, grateful and excited to be on this journey with ORM and Fertility Road and we look forward to sharing the next of chapter of our journey with you.

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Dr Barbieri comments on Heather and Brandon's journey

We have come to know Heather and Brandon on paper, through email, on the phone and via Skype these past few months. It's been such a pleasure to have them in Portland and to meet them both now in person.

They are very generous with sharing their journey in these articles and in documenting their experience in video. I know how helpful this it can be for other couples and individuals facing challenges in building their families to be able to read and hear others' stories and to know that they are not alone.

I am pleased with Heather and Brandon's treatment progress to date and have every confidence that we will be able to help them become the parents they so desire to be.

Doing our best to look after the genetic health of our patients' future children through proactive screening is an important part of our work at ORM, and this approach is integral to our in-house egg donation program.

I am delighted that Heather and Brandon have matched with a lovely egg donor from the ORM Donors program who has been fully-screened and is ready to help them on their journey.

Heather's endometriosis has I believe been a contributing factor to their fertility challenges. The results from her recent hysteroscopy were good, and I am encouraged that Heather is committed to maintaining a healthy lifestyle. This is helping to manage her endometriosis as well as give Heather and Brandon the best chance of success.

Now that we have completed the last of Heather and Brandon's pre-cycle screening, we will be finalising cycle calendars and working towards the exciting stages of egg retrieval and embryo creation.

The entire team at ORM is so looking forward to the next stage of their treatment and to having them back to Portland, Oregon in early 2018!