

Gestational Surrogacy Guidelines

Questions to Consider

- Why is Gestational Surrogacy a better option for you and your partner than adoption or child-free living?
- Have you discussed using a surrogate with your family? Why or why not? What were their reactions?
- Have you thought about telling your child about their background? If so, when and how?
- Have you considered how you might feel if, after all the interaction and sharing with a surrogate, she does not get pregnant?
- Have you considered how you would feel if the child were born with a birth defect?

How to Choose a Gestational Surrogacy Agency

- What is the fee schedule for the provider's services? Do you have to pay a fee upfront? Is the fee refundable if you change your mind about a surrogate? What exactly do the fees cover? Does the agency charge a different amount if you pay cash, check, or credit card?
- What is the fee for the surrogate herself? If she was a surrogate before, has her price remained the same or gone up? Does the agency provide an itemized list if the intended parents pay the surrogate's expenses?
- What kind of screening is the surrogate required to have? Who performs the psychological screening? The agency or a third party? Is there an extra charge for psychological testing (i.e., MMPI)? Can you see the results of the testing? Can you have the surrogate tested by a third party of your choosing?
- Does the agency facilitate a meeting between you and the surrogate?
- What records and information are kept on surrogates, where, and for how long? Are they accessible in the future? For how long?
- What is the legal contract the agency requires the surrogate to sign?
- How many surrogates does the agency match with intended parents in a year?
- Does the surrogacy agency help an uninsured surrogate find medical coverage?

Finding a Surrogate on Your Own

- A surrogate can be a relative or friend, or you may want to find a surrogate independently rather than using a surrogacy agency.
- A blood-related surrogate can be an excellent choice if the potential surrogate is not pressured into the treatment. Also, consider what would happen to the family relationships if the treatment was unsuccessful. The feeling of guilt of "letting you down" by the surrogate may be profound.
- Your surrogate does not have to live locally. It is possible to minimize the number of your surrogate's visits to Bay IVF. She would need to come for a 1 to 2-day visit prior to beginning the Gestational Surrogacy treatment and stay for one day during the treatment itself.

Positive Indicators When Searching for a Qualified Surrogate

- Younger than 40 years of age
- History of at least one full-term pregnancy
- History of regular menstrual periods
- No history of infertility or multiple miscarriages (three or more)

Negative Indicators When Searching for a Qualified Surrogate

- Substance abuse or two or more first-degree relatives with substance dependence
- Current use of psychotropic medications
- Family history of sexual or physical abuse without professional treatment for the surrogate
- Chaotic lifestyle
- Significant current stress
- Marital relationship instability
- History of legal difficulties
- High-risk sexual practices
- Under the age of 21
- Desperate financial situation
- Objection to Gestational Surrogacy by the partner of a potential surrogate

General Questions to Ask Potential Surrogates

- Why do you want to participate in Gestational Surrogacy?
- What are your feelings about being available for the baby in the future?
- What are your expectations about how a child born from this treatment should be raised?
- Does it matter if the intended parents are married?
- Does it matter if I/we, as the intended parent(s), am/are single, gay, or lesbian?
- How do you imagine you will feel if the procedure does not succeed?
- Do you expect any legal relationship with the baby?
- What are your expectations, if any, around receiving a fee for your participation?
- Are you willing to participate a second time if we desire siblings for our child or if a pregnancy didn't result from the first attempt?
- Do you have any children of your own? How many do you have, and what are their ages?
- Are you willing to participate in a counseling session?
- Do you know you must sign a legal agreement detailing your willingness to give up all parental claims and responsibilities?
- Do you have health insurance in the event of pregnancy complications?
- If you have a partner, how does he feel about your interest in Gestational Surrogacy?
- What is your understanding of the medical procedures needed to prepare your uterus to receive the embryo(s)?

- Who will be your support person during the treatment? Who will give you your injections?
- Are you aware that there may be a twin pregnancy? How do you feel about this possibility?
- Are there people with whom you have shared your interest to be a surrogate? If so, what were their reactions?
- Why do you think you would be a good surrogate?
- What do you believe your strengths and weaknesses are?
- Do you have any ethical or religious viewpoints that might affect your decision to be a surrogate?
- Do you know anyone who has been a surrogate? What was her experience?
- Where did you learn about this opportunity?
- What are your feelings about selective termination or selective reduction?
- Are you willing to have amniocentesis or chorionic villi sampling if recommended by your obstetrician?

Specific Questions When the Surrogate Is a Relative or Close Friend

It is presumed that any surrogate who is a relative or close friend will have an ongoing or close relationship with the intended parents. Consequently, the questions need not be as expansive as with a recruited surrogate.

- Is there anything significant about your relationship with your relative that contributed to your decision to be a surrogate?
- What do you imagine are the concerns associated with being a surrogate to a relative?
- How do you imagine your relationship will change by being a surrogate?
- How does your family feel about your decision to be a surrogate to a relative?
- Who will know about this decision, and who will not?
- If you have decided to keep this private, how do you expect to handle an unplanned disclosure?
- If you have a partner, how does he feel about the possibility of a baby born from this procedure? Will he participate in counseling if requested?
- Have you discussed the risks associated with this procedure and the medication you would take with your partner?
- How would your relationship be affected if the treatment is unsuccessful?

Specific Questions for an Unrelated Surrogate

- Have you or any member of your immediate family ever smoked, drank, or used illegal substances? To what extent and have any of these ever been a problem?
- Have you ever been pregnant? What was the outcome?
- Have you ever been a surrogate before? If so, was there a resulting successful pregnancy?
- Do you have any children? If yes, how old are they? Have they had any significant health issues we should know about? What was their birth weight and length?

- If you do not have children, why do you want to help us have a baby? Have you considered the unlikely circumstance where, at a later date, you might be unable to conceive?
- Why do you want to be a surrogate?
- If you get pregnant, will you tell your family members, including your children, that this is a Gestational Surrogacy pregnancy? If so, how will you tell them, and when?
- Have you thought about how you would feel if, after all this interaction and sharing, you did not get pregnant?
- Have you considered whether you would like ongoing contact, such as pictures, phone calls, or meeting the child?
- Is your job or school situation flexible enough to do this procedure? Do you have child care available if you have children?