

Americans' Knowledge of and Opinions About In Vitro Fertilization (IVF)

On behalf of The Heritage Foundation, J.L. Partners polled a nationally representative sample of 1,002 registered voters online between March 31, 2025 to April 3, 2025.

Quotas were added to ensure representative data on region, 2024 presidential vote, partisan ID, age, gender, ethnicity, education and density; and the sample was also weighted back to these same variables. The survey has a margin of error of 3.4%.

Question	Count	Percentage
<i>Which of the following do you think defines what in vitro fertilization (IVF) is?</i>		
A fertility treatment where eggs are fertilized with sperm in a laboratory, and the resulting embryo(s) are then transferred to the woman's uterus to grow and develop	564	56
A technique used to monitor a baby's health during pregnancy through an IV drip	45	4
A process in regenerative medicine where cells are stimulated to form new tissue	50	5
A fertility treatment where sperm is placed inside of a woman in hopes that she conceives a child	163	16
A fertility treatment where specific ovarian follicles are enhanced to increase natural conception chances	83	8
None of the above	97	10

How familiar are you with IVF?

Very familiar	145	14
Somewhat familiar	414	41
Heard of it but don't know much	310	31
Not familiar at all	133	13

Based on what you currently know, do you support or oppose the use of IVF for couples

Strongly support	512	51
Somewhat support	305	30
Somewhat oppose	65	6
Strongly oppose	16	2
Unsure	104	10

Question	Count	Percentage
<i>Some IVF clinics encourage patients to create as many embryos as possible, but research suggests many embryos are never implanted. Which of the following statements on the number of embryos created in the IVF process comes closest to your view?</i>		
There should be limits on the number of embryos created	437	44
There should not be limits on the number of embryos created	296	30
Unsure	269	27

Some countries regulate IVF by requiring that all embryos created must eventually be implanted, reducing embryo loss. Would you support or oppose similar regulations in the U.S.?

Strongly support	210	21
Somewhat support	328	33
Somewhat oppose	147	15
Strongly oppose	85	8
Unsure	232	23

In your opinion, what should be done with embryos that are no longer wanted or needed?

They should be donated to other couples	309	31
They should be kept frozen indefinitely	167	17
They should be used for research	211	21
They should be discarded	111	11
Unsure	204	20

In studies published by the CDC, Oxford University, Jama Network, the European Society of Cardiology, Direct Science, and the NIH, researchers found that babies conceived through IVF are at higher risk for premature birth, low birth weight, cancer, congenital heart defects, and developmental issues compared to naturally conceived babies. How much of a factor should these risks be in considering IVF as a treatment for infertility?

A major factor	413	41
A minor factor	359	36
Not a factor	83	8
Unsure	147	15

Research published by the NIH and BMC indicates that women who undergo IVF face a higher risk of serious pregnancy complications, including preeclampsia, gestational diabetes, severe maternal morbidity, and Cesarean section, compared to women who conceive naturally. Were you aware of these risks before this survey?

Yes, aware of all	199	20
Yes, aware of some	317	32
No, not aware of any	486	49

Question	Count	Percentage
<i>Which of the following statements comes closest to your view?</i>		
Fertility specialists need to do more to inform women about any potential health risks of IVF before they undergo treatment	550	55
Fertility specialists already do the right amount of informing women about any potential health risks of IVF before they undergo treatment	290	29
Unsure	162	16

Some doctors focus on trying to diagnose and treat the causes of infertility (such as hormonal imbalances, miscarriage, endometriosis, blocked fallopian tubes, or other underlying health conditions), while others recommend IVF as an early approach to infertility. In your opinion, which approach should be prioritized?

First, treating the root issue which is causing the symptom of infertility	531	53
Using IVF as a first-line treatment	86	9
A combination of both	263	26
Unsure	122	12

If medical advancements made it easier to improve natural fertility without relying on IVF, which would you consider a better option for couples facing infertility?

Treating the causes of infertility first	706	70
Using IVF as a first-line treatment	137	14
Unsure	159	16

How important is it, if at all, for couples struggling with infertility to explore personalized treatment plans to address their infertility, specifically tailored to their medical history and reproductive health?

Very important	601	60
Somewhat important	287	29
Not important	27	3
Unsure	87	9

IVF is commonly referred to as assisted reproductive technology (ART), but some experts describe it as artificial reproductive technology. Which term do you believe better describes the process?

Assisted reproductive technology	544	54
Artificial reproductive technology	249	25
Neither	90	9
Unsure	119	12

Question	Count	Percentage
<i>Many IVF clinics offer preimplantation genetic testing (PGT) to screen embryos for genetic conditions, disease burden, sex selection, and even potential intelligence markers. Were you previously aware of this practice or not?</i>		
Yes	391	39
No	611	61
<i>Some parents may prefer to have a female child and would select a female embryo, while others may want to select an embryo based on intelligence. IVF treatment allows people to select embryos on this basis. Which of the following statements comes closest to your view?</i>		
Parents should have full control and be able to select for genetic traits like sex or intelligence	434	43
Selecting for genetic traits like sex or intelligence should not be allowed	349	35
Unsure	219	22
<i>Some parents may prefer to have a female child and would select a female embryo, while others may want to select an embryo based on intelligence IVF treatment allows people to select embryos on this basis Which of the following statements comes closest to your view?</i>		
This is ethical	384	38
This is not ethical	371	37
Unsure	247	25
<i>Do you support or oppose regulations on the use of genetic testing in IVF to prevent selection based on traits such as sex or intelligence?</i>		
Strongly support	201	20
Somewhat support	285	28
Somewhat oppose	192	19
Strongly oppose	109	11
Unsure	215	21
<i>After answering these questions, have your views on IVF changed in any way?</i>		
Yes, I am now more supportive	180	18
Yes, I am now more concerned	300	30
No, my views remain the same	417	42
Unsure	105	10

Question	Count	Percentage
<i>IVF clinics are not legally required to disclose to patients how many embryos are likely to be created, how many are likely to be discarded, or what the long-term storage policies are. Which of the following statements comes closest to your view?</i>		
Patients should receive more transparency before undergoing IVF and clinics should fully disclose these details	767	77
These details are not necessary to the patient and should not necessarily be disclosed	107	11
Unsure	128	13

Some fertility clinics advertise high success rates. Others say these numbers can be misleading because they may not account for failed cycles, embryo loss, or multiple attempts. Which of the following statements comes closest to your view?

Clinics should be required to report IVF success rates in a more standardized and transparent way	727	73
Current reporting is sufficient and requirements are not needed	139	14
Unsure	136	14

IVF increases the likelihood of multiple births (twins, triplets, etc.), which can raise risks for both the mother and the babies. Which of the following statements comes closest to your view?

IVF clinics should do more to prevent multiple pregnancies by transferring fewer embryos per cycle	465	46
Parents should decide how many embryos to transfer and IVF clinics should not try to limit them	345	34
Unsure	192	19

Some IVF clinics encourage “elective single embryo transfer” (eSET) to reduce health risks, while others implant multiple embryos to improve success rates. Which approach do you think is better?

One embryo to reduce chances of multiple births	420	42
Multiple embryos to increase chances of implantation	297	30
Unsure	285	28

In cases of multiple pregnancies resulting from in vitro fertilization (IVF), some doctors perform a procedure called “selective reduction,” in which one or more fetuses are terminated to reduce the number of babies carried to term. Do you support or oppose allowing this procedure?

Strongly support—it should be a standard medical option for women undergoing IVF	228	23
Somewhat support—it should be available, but with stricter medical guidelines	299	30
Somewhat oppose—it should be discouraged but available in rare cases	177	18
Strongly oppose—it should not be allowed under any circumstances	121	12
Unsure	177	18

Question	Count	Percentage
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The IVF industry in the U S generates billions of dollars annually, and some clinics operate with little government oversight: Below are a few arguments in favor and against greater regulation of the IVF industry. Please indicate if each makes you more or less likely to support stronger regulations.

Much more likely	233	23
Somewhat more likely	249	25
No difference	267	27
Somewhat less likely	81	8
Much less likely	48	5
Unsure	124	12

The IVF industry encourages the creation of more embryos than necessary because it increases clinic profits: Below are a few arguments in favor and against greater regulation of the IVF industry. Please indicate if each makes you more or less likely to support stronger regulations.

Much more likely	236	24
Somewhat more likely	211	21
No difference	241	24
Somewhat less likely	117	12
Much less likely	86	9
Unsure	111	11

If IVF is publicly funded, then it needs more oversight: Below are a few arguments in favor and against greater regulation of the IVF industry. Please indicate if each makes you more or less likely to support stronger regulations.

Much more likely	300	30
Somewhat more likely	297	30
No difference	216	22
Somewhat less likely	60	6
Much less likely	32	3
Unsure	97	10

Emerging technologies, such as artificial wombs and gene-editing of embryos, could further change the way IVF is practiced. Which of the following statements comes closest to your view?

Government should strictly regulate these advancements before they become widely available	432	43
Parents and doctors should be able to decide freely	393	39
Unsure	177	18

Question	Count	Percentage
<i>Some researchers are developing lab-created human embryos for scientific research purposes, with no intention of implantation. Which of the following statements comes closest to your view?</i>		
There should be ethical limits on creating embryos in this way	629	63
Research in this way should be unrestricted	208	21
Unsure	165	16

Some sperm donors have fathered dozens or even hundreds of children, leading to a large number of half-siblings. Should there or should there not be legal limits on the number of children a single sperm donor can father?

Yes, a strict limit should be imposed	339	34
Yes, but the limit should be flexible and based on factors such as location and demand	322	32
No, there should be no legal limits, but clinics should provide more transparency	151	15
No, there should be no restrictions on sperm donation	52	5
Unsure	138	14

Some countries, and the state of Colorado, have banned anonymous egg and sperm donation, requiring donors to be identifiable so that donor-conceived children can access their genetic origins, especially to identify closely related family members. Which of the following statements come closest to your view?

The U S should prohibit anonymous donation all donors should be identifiable so children can know their biological origins and closely related family members	505	50
Anonymous donation should remain legal	278	28
The U S should go a step further and prohibit all egg and sperm donation	44	4
Unsure	175	17

Some foreign nationals, the highest percentage from China, use American egg/sperm donation, IVF, and surrogacy services to conceive children in the United States who will receive U.S. birthright citizenship. Should the U.S. regulate or restrict access to these fertility services for non-citizens or not?

Yes, the US should ban non-citizens from accessing these services	333	33
Yes, there should be strict regulations and limitations, but not an outright ban	290	29
No, but clinics should be required to report and track foreign clients	116	12
No, all individuals should have equal access regardless of nationality	102	10
Unsure	161	16

Question	Count	Percentage
<i>Based on what you now know, do you support or oppose the use of IVF for couples with infertility issues?</i>		
Strongly support	347	35
Somewhat support	369	37
Somewhat oppose	108	11
Strongly oppose	48	5
Unsure	130	13