

ONCOFERTILITY AT NORTHWELL

**Proposal for
Elizabeth and Peter Menges**

October 2025



NorthwellSM
Fertility

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



Dear Liz and Pete,

Your generosity and past philanthropy have allowed us to foster an oncofertility program that helps women who cannot afford the services, as insurance does not cover these procedures. We are grateful for your commitment to our endeavor and look forward to sharing this proposal with you.

At Northwell Health, our unwavering commitment extends beyond the immediate healing of illness; it encompasses a profound dedication to preserving the complete well-being, quality of life, and cherished future aspirations of every patient we serve. We recognize that true comprehensive care addresses not only the physical maladies but also the dreams and life goals that define us. It is with this foundational belief that we are reaching out to you today, presenting an urgent and deeply inspiring opportunity to partner with us in a truly groundbreaking endeavor: Northwell Health's Ovarian Tissue Freezing Program. This pioneering initiative, under the expert leadership of Dr. Randi H. Goldman, Associate Professor at the Donald & Barbara Zucker School of Medicine at

Hofstra/Northwell and Program Director of our Reproductive Endocrinology & Infertility Fellowship, stands as a testament to our commitment to innovation and compassionate patient care. Through this program, we are actively shaping a future where a life-saving diagnosis does not necessitate the heartbreaking sacrifice of a patient's ability to build a family.



THE NORTHWELL CANCER INSTITUTE



The Northwell Cancer Institute treats more New Yorkers afflicted with cancer than any other health system in the state – more than 20,000 new cases are diagnosed and/or treated at Northwell each year. The mission of the Northwell Cancer Institute is to provide high-quality, comprehensive cancer care in a coordinated, multidisciplinary, and compassionate environment. Working closely with physicians throughout the healthcare system, the Northwell Cancer Institute delivers high-quality clinical care to patients at Northwell Health – the largest healthcare system in New York State. Northwell is committed to providing first-in-class cancer care that addresses the specific needs of those in our communities. Northwell's catchment area is more racially and ethnically diverse and foreign-born than the population of New York State and the United States. To provide the best cancer care to those in need, Northwell Cancer Institute is strategically investing in clinical, research, and outreach programs, including those specifically aimed at addressing cancer disparities.

Under the leadership of Richard Barakat, MD, Physician-in-Chief and Executive Director, and with the support of the Cancer Advisory Council, Northwell Cancer Institute has increased its capacity to deliver personalized cancer care tailored to each individual patient through significant investment in cancer genetics, genomics, and survivorship programs. Dr. Barakat has recruited leading experts in cancer clinical care and research to establish Northwell Cancer Institute as a destination center for cancers, including pancreatic, breast, lung, and prostate cancers, melanoma, and cancer during pregnancy. In addition, Dr. Barakat has strengthened Northwell Cancer Institute's seamless integration with Northwell's 28 hospitals to provide patients with access to high-quality multidisciplinary care, advanced treatment protocols, and cutting-edge clinical trials. Northwell Cancer Institute's innovative treatment approaches, leading cancer specialists, and cancer prevention, screening, diagnosis, treatment, research, and survivorship programs are improving the experience and outcomes of our patients.

THE CHALLENGE : CANCER & FERTILITY

For many individuals facing a cancer diagnosis, the immediate focus is life-saving treatment. However, this often comes at a profound cost: the ability to have children. Cancer treatments, particularly chemotherapy, are highly gonadotoxic, frequently leading to premature ovarian insufficiency and permanent infertility. While survival rates for young women with cancer are increasingly dramatically, the dream of building a family often remains out of reach.

Traditional fertility preservation methods, such as egg or embryo freezing, are vital. However, they are not always an option.

- Pre-pubertal girls: These options are impossible as they haven't reached reproductive maturity.
- Urgent treatment: Many cancer diagnoses require immediate treatment, leaving no time for the 2-3 weeks needed for hormonal stimulation and egg retrieval.

OUR SOLUTION

EGG PRESERVATION

At Northwell Health Fertility, our egg preservation process program allows patients to preserve their fertility for a later time when they might feel ready to start a family. When a woman seeks fertility preservation, she can do so through egg freezing or embryo banking.

Previously, egg freezing was not very successful. Earlier freezing techniques caused the egg to expand with ice crystal formation, which is known to be detrimental to internal proteins and DNA. Improved freezing methods, such as vitrification, avoid ice crystals, offering better protection against damage. Vitrification is also associated with excellent warming survival rates when the time comes for implantation. At Northwell Health, vitrification is used exclusively in the egg freezing process.

OVARIAN TISSUE FREEZING

Northwell is at the forefront of providing comprehensive oncofertility care, offering cutting-edge options to safeguard reproductive health. Our Ovarian Tissue Freezing (OTF) Program is a beacon of hope for those who have other options unavailable. OTF is a sophisticated process where a small portion of ovarian cortex is surgically removed, cut into fragments, and cryopreserved for future use. This tissue contains thousands of immature eggs, offering the potential for future fertility after cancer treatment is complete.

In November 2024, Northwell became the first health system on Long Island to offer ovarian tissue freezing. This revolutionary program is the result of a multi-year development process, requiring significant investment in slow-freezing technology, specialized laboratory personnel training, rigorous guidelines, and crucial legal/regulatory approvals. It involves a coordinated effort across Reproductive Endocrinology and infertility, Gyn/Minimally Invasive Gynecologic Surgery, Pediatric and Adolescent GYN, Oncology teams, and Social Workers. By preserving ovarian tissue, we can theoretically save thousands of immature eggs at one time, expanding reproductive options that were previously impossible. So far in 2025, 6 patients have undergone ovarian tissue cryopreservation at Northwell.

THE URGENT NEED: ELIMINATING FINANCIAL BARRIERS

While we have established an unparalleled program, a critical barrier remains: financial access. Traditional egg/embryo freezing can cost upwards of \$10,000, with medications often doubling that figure. Insurance often denies coverage for fertility preservation, even for cancer patients. Crucially, OTF is **never** covered by insurance.

This means that for many patients and their families, especially those already burdened by cancer treatment costs, this life-altering option is simply out of reach. Access to these cutting-edge services should not depend on a patient's ability to pay.

IMPACT

A gift to Northwell's Oncofertility program will directly address this critical need by:

- Removing Financial Barriers – Ensuring that all eligible patients, regardless of their financial circumstances, can access this vital fertility preservation technology.
- Providing Hope and Choice: Empowering young cancer patients and their families with the ability to choose to build families in the future.
- Fueling Innovation: Supporting ongoing research and the continued development of this groundbreaking program, solidifying Northwell's leadership in reproductive medicine.
- Supporting Comprehensive Care: Allowing Northwell to continue providing the most comprehensive, integrated, and compassionate oncofertility care available.



OPPORTUNITY

\$200,000 | THE MENGES LEGACY FUND **\$40,000 a year for 5 years**

A gift of \$100,000 would enable the Oncofertility Program to cover the costs of fertility preservation for approximately 10 – 15 patients. This includes egg freezing (estimated at \$7,000 - \$8,000 per patient) or medical embryo freezing without genetic testing(approximately \$14,000 per patient).

\$100,000 | THE MENGES INNOVATION FUND **\$20,000 a year for 5 years**

A gift of \$200,000 would double this capacity, allowing us to support a larger number of patients. In addition, it would expand access to navigation services, ensuring patients receive comprehensive guidance throughout the fertility preservation process.

If you would like to consider alternate gift opportunities, we can figure out a way to achieve your goals. Thank you for your consideration and for the opportunity to help women in need. We look forward to continuing this conversation.

Contact

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