

## COVID lockdowns have prompted more women to freeze their eggs, but success rates remain vanishingly low

According to UK [fertility](#) regulator the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority (HFEA), the number of women freezing their eggs or embryos rocketed by 523 per cent between 2013 and 2018, and clinics say enquiries have risen by as much as 50 per cent over lockdown — a spike many clinicians put down to the pandemic placing a focus on family and restricting dating opportunities.

[Recently], the Government's technology tsar called on companies to join employers such as Goldman Sachs, Facebook and Apple which now offer up to £16,000 for often prohibitively expensive fertility treatments including egg-freezing.

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But relieving women of the financial pressure doesn't help with the slim chances of getting pregnant at the end of it. Using fresh eggs has a higher success rate than that of frozen eggs, as does freezing embryos, which requires fertilising fresh eggs with sperm before the freezing process.

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"If you buy insurance, you're guaranteed a benefit if you need it," explains Dr Julie Lamb, a director at Pacific NW Fertility in Seattle. "Egg-freezing isn't an insurance policy, because it doesn't pay out all the time."

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