

### Transcript Details

This is a transcript of an educational program. Details about the program and additional media formats for the program are accessible by visiting: <https://reachmd.com/programs/clinicians-roundtable/oncology-related-infertility-collaborative-care/56785/>

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## Addressing Oncology-Related Infertility Through Collaborative Care

### Announcer:

You're listening to *Clinician's Roundtable* on ReachMD. On this episode, we'll learn about oncology-related infertility with Dr. Irene Su. She's the Director of the Reproductive Survivorship program at UC San Diego Health and a Professor in the Department of Obstetrics, Gynecology, and Reproductive Sciences at UC San Diego School of Medicine. Let's hear from Dr. Su now.

### Dr. Su:

Oncofertility is a field that is at the intersection of oncology and fertility, and it's really been born of the fact that some, but not all, cancer treatments can impact fertility.

Oncofertility care really starts and is most helpful to our patients as early as possible in their cancer journey. And what I mean by that is as soon as they are able, oncology care teams should introduce the idea that cancer treatment is being recommended and that cancer treatment may or may not harm their future reproductive health in order to help these young cancer survivors start to think a bit about what family looks like for them in the future and if they want to speak with a fertility specialist. So that first step is early screening for reproductive needs in the future, early risk counseling about what their infertility and reproductive risks are, and a rapid referral between the oncology team and the fertility team. The earlier that this happens for a cancer patient, the more fertility preservation options that they have before that urgent need to start cancer treatment.

So oncofertility care is a team sport. And it is so important that oncology and fertility specialists plan to work together to support the youngest of our cancer patients through their reproductive health needs. So what that means is building those collaborations. Specifically, an oncology care team should learn and reach out to fertility specialists and vice versa in their neighborhood who could see patients early and support them in their fertility preservation decision-making.

So it's really about building those relationships. But it's not only about who you know, but also about establishing processes. For example, there are a number of electronic health record-based tools now where for every newly diagnosed patient, there will be a nudge to the oncology team that, "Hey, this is a newly diagnosed patient. Have you thought about counseling them on their reproductive health risks and fertility preservation?" And then that process is then linked to a referral to fertility specialists so that it's less about who you know, but more about the fact that processes are in place to link oncology and reproductive specialists.

One of the big missing pieces is that once patients head to the fertility specialists and undergo fertility preservation treatments, it is so important for reproductive and fertility specialists to communicate that information back to the oncology team and to close the loop so that for that cancer patient, all of their team knows what has happened with regard to the reproductive healthcare.

### Announcer:

That was Dr. Irene Su talking about oncology-related infertility. To access this and other episodes in our series, visit *Clinician's Roundtable* on ReachMD.com, where you can Be Part of the Knowledge. Thanks for listening!