The Ovum Pick-Up (OPU) process is the first step of in vitro fertilization, where oocytes are collected from the donor before being taken to a Vytelle lab. Below you will find the most frequently asked questions regarding our OPU process:

ARE OPU PROCEDURES SAFE?
Ovum pick-up is extremely safe, with very low risk to donors. Prior to the procedure, the donor will receive epidural anesthesia, blocking all sensitivity of the ovaries and ensuring maximum comfort.

WHAT IS A QUALIFIED DONOR?
Donors must be physically mature enough for the technician to perform the OPU procedure. Because our process does not require hormone injections to set up donors for OPU, a qualified donor can be any female in your herd, including heifers as young as 6 months of age, open cows past 15 days postpartum and pregnant animals up to 100 days of gestation.

DO I NEED TO SET UP MY DONOR PRIOR TO THE OPU?
There is no set-up required prior to our IVF process, as we do not use follicle stimulating hormone (FSH) at any point. This allows producers the opportunity to select any donor, at any time, for IVF, while providing several benefits for the animal, the product and your operation.

HOW MANY OOCYTES ARE COLLECTED ON AVERAGE?
On average, dairy cattle produce around 23 oocytes per OPU, while beef cattle produce around 25 oocytes per OPU.

DOES THE DONOR’S AGE INFLUENCE THE NUMBER OF OOCYTES AND EMBRYOS PRODUCED?
Yes. Young and prepubertal donors can produce many oocytes, although they typically have a lower embryonic conversion rate. For mature cows, the oocyte to embryo conversion rate is estimated to be around 25-30% (grade 1 embryos only). Prepubertal females tend to have lower conversion rates, around 15-20%.

We can collect from animals as young as 6 months of age, but results tend to improve once a heifer reaches sexual maturity or first heat.

WHAT IS THE DURATION OF THE OPU PROCESS?
On average, OPU takes about 10 to 15 minutes per donor, but varies by the amount of follicles.

HOW FREQUENTLY CAN OPUS BE DONE?
Ovarian tissue is capable of extremely fast regeneration, allowing safe collection from the same donor as soon as seven days after the first collection. Work with a Vytelle technician to customize an OPU schedule for each donor, dependent on embryo needs. For best results, we recommend most donors be aspirated every two weeks.

WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN EMBRYO FLUSHING AND IVF?
Conventional embryo flushing is a process where fertilization and embryo development takes place within the donor, and the embryos are then flushed out for fresh embryo transfer or freezing.

In Vitro Fertilization (IVF) is the process of collecting oocytes (unfertilized embryos) from donors and fertilizing them in a lab setting. Embryos are then created eight days after ovum pick-up.

WHERE CAN I ATTEND AN IVF COLLECTION?
Vytelle has vast network of satellite partners all across the United States who host IVF sessions biweekly or monthly. Visit our website to find the location nearest to you.

WHAT IS THE COST STRUCTURE?
Vytelle has no hidden fees or upfront costs—simply one price per grade 1 embryo produced. Grade 2 embryos are available upon request.

For more information, please consult with your local satellite manager or Vytelle representative.
After the oocytes are collected, they are fertilized and cultured to support the growth of grade 1 embryos.

**WHEN WILL SEMEN BE NEEDED?**
Semen will be used the day after the OPU procedure. Semen can be picked up the same day as the oocyte collection if we are driving to the OPU location that day. If the OPU team is flying, semen should be shipped to the lab one week before the collection. Please contact your local POWERED BY VYTELLE satellite manager or Vytelle client service manager to discuss semen shipping options.

**WHAT IS VYTELLE’S EMBRYO QUALITY?**
Vytelle only freezes grade 1 embryos, which are the vast majority of our embryos produced. It is not expected to have high volumes of grade 2 embryos develop in our system, but if they are desired, they are available upon request at a decreased price.

**HOW MANY STRAWS OF SEMEN ARE NEEDED TO FERTILIZE OOCYTES?**
The number of straws may change according to the total number of oocytes collected from donors, and the semen quality. We recommend sending two straws for each sire, along with having a backup mating at the lab. One straw of high-quality conventional semen fertilizes an average of 210 oocytes, and presorted fertilizes an average of 150 oocytes. Two straws of semen is required for reverse sorting semen procedures. Depending on the quality of the semen, it can fertilize 120-150 oocytes.

**WHAT IS VYTELLE’S FROZEN EMBRYO PROCESS?**
Embryos are frozen using the Direct Thaw (DT) method. This makes it convenient for a trained embryo transfer technician to efficiently implant the embryo without any unnecessary handling.

**WHAT IS THE EXPECTED PREGNANCY RATE WITH IVF?**
For frozen grade 1 embryos, expect a 45-50% pregnancy rate, with frozen grade 2 embryos performing around 35-40%. For fresh grade 1 embryos, expect 55-60% successful pregnancy rate with fresh grade 2 embryos around 40-45%. These averages vary depending on several factors including donor management, recipient management and transfer technician.

**ARE ANY RECIPIENTS SKIPPED DURING IMPLANTATION?**
All recipients are checked for an adequate Corpus Luteum (CL) before an embryo is implanted. On average, 5-10% of recipients are skipped during implantation. It is important to account for this kick-out rate when coordinating fresh transfers.