Focusing on You: Reproductive Urology at Sylvester

Planning for the Future with Fertility Preservation Counseling

Dr. Ranjith Ramasamy, director of Reproductive Urology at Sylvester Comprehensive Cancer Center, part of the University of Miami Health System, discusses the benefits of fertility preservation counseling for newly-diagnosed patients with cancer.
TRANSCRIPTION

Pam Giganti:

Kevin Dwyer and his wife, Nancy, were just newlyweds when Kevin was diagnosed with testicular cancer, threatening their hopes of one day starting a family.

Kevin Dwyer:

There was so much going on that it would have taken us a little while, if we even did have come to realize that, "Hey, maybe we should think about fertility preservation."

Pam Giganti:

But thanks to counseling and treatment provided by Kevin's doctor, Dr. Ranjith Ramasamy, the Dwyers were able to better plan for the future.

Dr. Ranjith Ramasamy:

Here at the Sylvester Comprehensive Cancer Center, we've established a fertility preservation program as part of the AYA, or the Adolescent and Young Adult Cancer Program, and all patients are actually offered fertility preservation counseling. And if they are interested, we offer same day services to obtain the specimen, to freeze the specimen, to counsel the patient and/or their parent about the options for fertility preservation, and do this in a seamless fashion.

Pam Giganti:

But not all men with cancer get the same advice. In fact, a new study coauthored by Dr. Ramasamy and published in the prestigious Journal of the American Medical Association found that less than half of eligible patients are given fertility preservation counseling upon receiving their cancer diagnosis.
Kevin Dwyer:
It was great that he had brought up fertility right off the bat. I actually was able to preserve some specimen on that initial visit, which was great to get done and out of the way, and to have that peace of mind going forward through treatment.

Pam Giganti:
Nancy got pregnant naturally before Kevin started treatment. Now with frozen sperm in the bank, they can plan on adding to their family in the future.

Kevin Dwyer:
Right now we cannot naturally have a child. He has been very supportive in talking to us about ways that we can try to help reverse that, and the main thing with that is going to be time, but having that sperm on ice is putting us at ease knowing that even if it never comes back, that we can use that to have another kid in the future. Because we are very much looking forward to it.

Nancy Dwyer:
When you're going through this, you want the top, like the top of the line, the best doctors. We have absolutely no regrets.