

# Canada warns not to buy 'fresh' semen online

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Canada's health agency on Tuesday warned would-be parents not to purchase "fresh" semen online, saying it may be tainted with infectious diseases.

"Health Canada is reminding Canadians of the serious potential health risks of using donor semen for assisted conception obtained through potentially unreliable sources, such as the Internet," the government agency said.

Donor semen obtained through "questionable means," it explained, may not have been screened or tested, and therefore may not be safe.

Canada has strict controls for obtaining donor semen to minimize the potential risk of transmitting serious [infectious diseases](#). The regulations require that donor semen must be quarantined for a minimum of six months, and donors must be screened and tested before the donation and six months after.

"Canadians should be cautious of websites advertising the availability of semen, such as 'fresh' semen that has not been processed and cryopreserved (frozen)," it said.

The sellers may claim that the semen donors were properly screened and tested. But "such claims may not be true," Health Canada warned.

The agency listed infectious diseases such as HIV/AIDS, [hepatitis B](#) or C, [syphilis](#), [chlamydia](#), or [gonorrhoea](#) that could be passed to both a

mother and children born through the use of donor semen.

It also directed Canadians to a list of approved semen processors and importers on its website that are subject to regular inspections.

The agency's warning is the second issued in the past year in response to media reports of online advertisements directed at Canadians seeking to become parents through assisted conception.

Health Canada spokesman Gary Holub told AFP "no actual case (of infection) prompted the warning." "We're just being diligent."

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