

# TIPS TO BOOST YOUR FERTILITY



There are a number of factors that can influence your fertility that you have no control over, but there are several things you can do to maximise your chances of conception. Some of these factors will affect both male and female partners, but we will endeavour to cover them separately for males and females.

## FEMALE

### Diet & Exercise

It is recommended to follow a sensible diet and exercise program both before and during pregnancy.

Women who are either markedly overweight or underweight may have trouble conceiving. A healthy balanced diet rich in lean proteins and fresh fruit and vegetables is important.

Regular moderate exercise for an average of 30mins per session at least 3 times per week is recommended.

### Smoking

Smoking in women has been shown to increase the risk of miscarriage and also the risk of premature birth and low birth weight babies. This is in addition to all the long term health risks associated with cigarette smoking.

### Alcohol

Alcohol consumption should be eliminated entirely or at least restricted prior to and after conception. In women, it has been shown to increase the risk of birth defects.

### Stress

The process of trying to conceive can be stressful and research shows that women under stress produce prolactin which can interfere with regular ovulation. Find ways to relax, like yoga or meditation.

### Caffeine

Caffeine comes in many disguises, not just our daily coffee. High consumption of caffeine has been shown to increase the risk of miscarriage, so limit your daily consumption to just 1-2 cups of coffee daily. Remember though that chocolate, colas and energy drinks all have amounts of caffeine in them so you may be consuming more than you are aware of.

### Folic Acid

You need to be taking a folic acid supplement at least one month before trying to conceive.

### Recreational Drugs

Studies have shown that these drugs can increase the risk of birth defects and also cause medical problems in the mother.

### Lubricants

These may affect the sperm quality so should be avoided if you are trying to conceive.

### Toxins

We are faced with a myriad of environmental toxins on a daily basis. If you work with or around toxins, you need to be using protective face masks etc.

Talk with your Dr or Specialist if you have any concerns.



## MALE

### Diet and Exercise

As with the female, diet and exercise play an important role in the production of healthy sperm. Men should also try and maintain a healthy body weight and do regular moderate exercise. A diet rich in lean proteins and fresh fruit and vegetables is recommended.

Men need to keep in mind that sperm is produced at slightly below body temperature, so it is important to exercise at a sensible pace and not overheat yourself.

### Keep Cool

Because of overheating, sperm quality can be affected. The testes are outside the body to keep them cooler for a reason. Avoid hot spas, saunas, tight jeans or even sitting with your laptop on your lap.

### Smoking

Apart from the long term risks associated with smoking, studies have also shown problems with sperm DNA Fragmentation.

### Alcohol

Excessive consumption effects sperm quality making it harder to conceive. Limit your intake if trying to conceive.

### Stress

Studies have shown that the semen quality declines during periods of stress. Find ways to lower your stress levels, like going for a walk or playing golf with your friends.

### Caffeine

There are both positives and negatives with caffeine intake for men when trying to conceive. It has been shown to boost mobility, however consuming more than 3 cups per day or 300mg of caffeine can result in sperm DNA damage. If smoking, alcohol and caffeine are combined there is a dramatic decrease in sperm quality.

### Vitamin Supplements

Zinc deficiency can reduce testosterone levels and semen production. Taking a supplement can improve the DNA quality.

We recommend taking a supplement with antioxidants and Zinc. There are several formulations available so ask your Dr or Pharmacist for advice. You will need to begin taking this 3 months prior to conception.

### Recreational Drugs

Studies have shown Marijuana to have a major impact on sperm quality and quantity. It is not advisable to use any form of recreational drug when trying to conceive or after conception.

### Toxins

We are faced with a myriad of environmental toxins on a daily basis. If you work with paints, diesel fumes or pesticides to name a few, you need to be using protective face masks etc. Pollutants can cause DNA damage to sperm. Give them a wide berth whilst trying to conceive or take all safety measures possible whilst using them. Talk with your Dr or Specialist if you have any concerns.

### Ejaculation Frequency

There is a common misconception that if you "save it up" and don't ejaculate until ovulation then you will have more sperm and achieve fertilisation. This is definitely not the case. If you "save it up" the sperm become sluggish and tend to have more chance of DNA damage. You need to ejaculate regularly to keep the sperm healthy and motile. For best results you should try and ejaculate every 2 days especially when your partner is ovulating. Often we are asked "can you ejaculate too much?" If you are ejaculating daily this will not cause a problem with most males. The quantity will not be as much but the quality should be good.