

Dos and Don'ts for Optimal Fertility

Your body will perform at its best and any medications or treatments will have better effect if you keep your diet and lifestyle as clean as possible. Limiting toxins and unhealthy foods from your daily life will encourage the proper functioning of all organ systems and boost fertility.

The following is a list of recommendations:

- Limit exposure to pollutants and heavy metals i.e. don't exercise near auto traffic
- Limit pesticide, hormone and drug consumption by eating organic whenever possible
- Use filtered water
- Limit saturated fat and hydrogenated oils (eliminate trans fat) intake
- Increase fiber in your diet
- Increase fruits, veggies and whole grains in your diet
- Limit alcohol consumption
- Do not smoke cigarettes or marijuana
- Avoid taking over-the-counter medications
- Do not sit in very hot bath or hot tubs
- Add omega fatty acids to your diet
 - Udo's Oil Blend (Omega 3,6,9)- is very high in antioxidants, and a clean source of omega fatty acids. Add this to already cooked food- do not cook with it.
- Avoid soft plastic water bottles as the plastics can leach into the water, especially when left in the sun. SIGG bottles are a good alternative.

In addition, men should avoid situations that keep excessive heat around the reproductive area as sperm are sensitive to high temperatures. This can include avoiding the use of laptops on the lap and carrying cell phones in front pockets. Also, wearing tight briefs and riding a stationary or long distance bicycle are not recommended.

A word about **Vitamins.....**

All vitamins are not created equal. The biggest distinction is found between vitamins manufactured from petroleum byproducts and those made from food sources. Cheaper brands found at big box stores are in the petroleum category and have fewer vitamins derived in forms that the body can easily assimilate. Natural food stores, for example, Whole Foods only carry vitamins derived from food sources. Triangle Acupuncture Clinic also stocks high quality vitamins and supplements at competitive prices. We believe that multi-vitamins play a crucial role in maintaining a healthy body and supporting a high-functioning reproductive system. Make sure your brand fits the bill by asking your acupuncturist.

Additional Supplements for men

Zinc: 60 mg/day (supplements should be iron and copper free, but for long-term zinc supplementation (longer than 6 months) should be combined with 1-2 mg of copper/day)

*Regulates testosterone levels

*Aids in sperm production and increased motility

Vit. B12: 1000mcg/day (take sublingual dose of 4,000-5,000 mcg to absorb 1,000 mcg)

*Improves sperm count and motility, and ensures adequate cell replication

Vitamin B Complex vitamin:

*Moderate the effects of stress and ensure adequate cell replication

Folic Acid: 400 mcg/day

*Improves sperm count and motility

Vitamin E: 800 IU/day

*Resolve free-radical damage and oxidative stress on sperm

Pycnogenol: Very good anti-oxidant made from pine bark extract. Take this by itself or find an antioxidant that contains pycnogenol with red wine extract, grape seed extract and bilberry extract.

*Resolve free-radical damage and oxidative stress on sperm

L-Carnatine: 1,200 mg/day Proxeed is doctor recommended brand name

*Improves sperm motility

L-Arginine: 2-4 grams/day

*Amino acid for increasing sperm production

Additional Supplements for Women:

High quality whole foods based multi-vitamin. Recommended brand is Alive, health food stores typically carry many good choices. We do not recommend a 'prenatal' vitamin as they usually contain iron. Iron in pill form is hard to digest and can cause stomach upset and constipation.

Floradix is a very high quality **liquid iron** supplement that is highly absorbable and rarely causes digestive upset. We recommend that women take an iron supplement to increase stores before a pregnancy. Low iron has been linked to infertility. Floradix is vegetarian and you can find it at most health food stores.

Folic Acid taken 3 months prior to conception is important to reduce the incidence of birth defects. 800micrograms/day.

Vitamin B6 and B12 are important to maintain the proper balance of estrogen and progesterone. B6 is particularly depleted in women who take birth control pills. There have been reports that increasing B6 and B12 can improve luteal phase defect or low progesterone issues.

Essential Fatty Acids such as **Omega 3,6 Fish Oils** and **Evening Primrose Oil** are very important for proper functioning of prostaglandins. This is important to good health in general and many aspects of the menstrual cycle, especially ovulation. 1,000mg/day.

DHEA has been recently shown to improve ovarian response, particularly in poor responders. DHEA is a precursor hormone from which the body makes testosterone, estrogen and others. It is a good idea to get a blood test to find out if your DHEA levels are low before starting a supplement as it is not recommended to have too much DHEA in your system. To have a positive benefit, it is best to take DHEA 3-4 months before starting an IVF cycle. The dose varies from 30-40 mg.

Bee Pollen is worker bee food and rich in vitamins, minerals, nucleic acids and steroid hormones. **Royal Jelly** is refined bee pollen fed to the queen bee and is the bee equivalent of fertility drugs. It is highly nourishing and rich in B vitamins, hormones, enzymes and amino acids.

Vitex is known for normalizing hormone levels and aiding progesterone in the luteal phase.

Guaifenesin is an expectorant made by cold medicine brands. It aids in the production of mucus and can help thin cervical fluid that is too thick or scanty. Women should avoid antihistamines and decongestants found in allergy and cold medicines as these can dry up cervical fluid.

Preseed is a lubricant that mimics cervical fluid. It is pH balanced to match cervical mucus and is uniquely developed not to harm sperm. It is a very important product for women trying naturally who have scanty or undetectable cervical fluid.