

# The Fertility Formula

## *Nutrition & Lifestyle Preconception Program*

- Visit your General Practitioner for a check-up, including breast check and a pap smear.
- Discuss any medications you may be taking and their safety in pregnancy.
- Have your rubella and varicella immunity tested along with basic preconception care blood testing i.e. vitamin D, Iron, B12, antibody screen, FBE and thyroid function.
- Check both yours and your partners' blood type. If your blood group is negative but your partner's is positive, conception will need careful attention.
- If you have had any previous obstetric history a family history or advanced maternal age you may wish to discuss genetic testing with your doctor.
- Visit your dentist; have a check-up, brush and floss regularly. Studies have shown that it takes women with gum disease longer to conceive than women with healthy gums.
- See your naturopath or herbalist to ensure you are taking good quality preconception vitamins. A lot more than the well-known folate is needed. The best form of folate is folinic acid, it is much easier for the body to absorb especially for those carrying gene mutations.
- Folinic acid is found in a 'practitioner only' pregnancy multivitamin and should be started three months prior to conception. This is important to prevent neural tube defects. Your naturopath or herbalist will provide you with other supplements that may be required alongside your multivitamin, such as fish oils (proven to improve babies cognitive function), iron (a common deficiency for ladies with heavy menstrual flow), vitamin D (important to ensure that you have a good vitamin D status or immune balance), calcium (essential for the development of babies teeth and bones), magnesium (important for stress management and to prevent uterine contraction during pregnancy), selenium (important for sperm health and for auto immune disorders) or zinc (if you have taken the oral contraceptive pill you will most likely be low in this vital fertility mineral). It is important that your body is in optimal shape before you try to conceive. You wouldn't attempt a nine month road trip in your car without having it checked out and maintained by a mechanic – so treat your body with the same respect!

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- Start cleaning up your diet; remove alcohol, caffeine, additives, preservatives and fast foods. See the Fertility Formula for more information.
- Get help to stop all illicit drugs as these will severely impact on the health of your child.
- Check your relationship, is it healthy? Babies do not heal relationships, relationship issues are best addressed before conception. See a counsellor or talk to your doctor and ask them to refer you to a psychologist for relationship advice.
- If you are ready to become parent then it is time to get fit with regular non-contact exercise. Aim to be as close to your recommended ideal weight as possible before conception. Exercise enhances fertility and helps with stress management.
- In the very early stages of pregnancy your baby may be harmed by toxoplasmosis and listeria. Safe, hygienic food preparation is essential. Avoiding cat litter is important to avoid toxoplasmosis.

In health and happiness



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