

Fertility Green Prescription

Maximise your chances of conception, a healthy pregnancy and healthy baby

	How you score		What you can do
Age	30 and younger: optimal chance of pregnancy		You can't change your age but you can make best use of the time you have: seek expert advice. Consider age when planning your future family. Fertility treatment can't overcome age.
	30-34: relative chance per month reduced by a quarter		
	35-39: relative chance per month reduced by half		
	!	40-43: relative chance per month reduced by three quarters	
	!	44 and older: very low chance Men's age is also important, especially after 45.	
Timing of sex	I know my fertile time		The best time for sex is 1-2 days before ovulation. Learn how to check for fertile mucus and to use basal temperatures to confirm ovulation. Consider urinary fertility tests if unsure.
	I don't know or I'm not sure of my fertile time		
Weight	BMI 18-25	Being overweight or obese can reduce fertility and increase problems in pregnancy. Obesity in men may reduce sperm quality and increase the risk of erection problems.	Even modest (5kg) weight loss plus moderate exercise may restore ovulation if you are overweight and have irregular periods. It will also help if you need treatment. A good diet, exercise, and a normal BMI is good for your pregnancy and your child's long-term health.
	BMI 26-32		
	!		
Alcohol	Not drinking while trying to become pregnant	Alcohol can reduce fertility, increase the risk of miscarriage, and impair the baby's brain development.	Avoid alcohol and recreational drugs when you are trying to become pregnant. Stop at least 3 months before trying. Caffeine (coffee, many teas, energy drinks) may reduce fertility in men and women, so avoid it or reduce to one cup a day.
	Drinking while trying to become pregnant		
	!		
Smoking	I have never smoked	Smoking halves the chance of pregnancy per month, reduces blood flow and nutrition to the foetus, and can affect long term health of the child. In men, smoking damages the DNA in sperm.	The adverse effects of smoking on fertility are reversed by 3 months after stopping - so stop well before trying to get pregnant. Beware of other potentially toxic chemicals in your life - consider pesticides, plastics and cosmetics.
	I don't smoke anymore		
	!		

If you score a **!** you won't be eligible for publicly funded fertility treatment in New Zealand.

Turn over for more information on timing sex for conception and nutritional advice to improve your fertility ► and maximise your baby's health.



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GENERAL DIETARY GUIDELINES

- Ensure adequate protein – fish, chicken, lean red meat, eggs, dairy, legumes
- Reduce saturated fats and trans fats
- Ensure sources of healthy fats – olive oil, coconut oil, nuts, seeds, avocados
- Reduce sugars and refined carbohydrates, ensure adequate amounts of whole grains
- Avoid processed foods high in sugar, salt, additives, colourings and preservatives
- Eat plenty of antioxidant rich foods, including vegetables and fruit
- Eat organic where possible
- Drink plenty of fresh water
- Reduce caffeine to 1 cup per day and avoid soft drinks, energy drinks



TIMING OF SEX

Basal temperatures

Your temperature readings confirm whether you have ovulated. You will have relatively low temperatures from the time of your period until you ovulate. Ovulation will then cause a rise of about 0.2°C. The beginning of the rise in temperature signifies ovulation. Once you have ovulated, the temperatures remain high until there is a dip just before your next period.

Temperatures must be taken under the tongue with a digital thermometer first thing in the morning before getting out of bed.

Mucus signs

The nature of your cervical mucus tells you when you are approaching ovulation. The amount will increase as you get closer to ovulation. The texture can vary from none to pasty in the non-fertile phases, to stretchy or raw egg white consistency before and close to ovulation. Post ovulation the mucus generally changes back to the infertile type consistency.

Ovulation kits

Urine-based OPKs test your urine for an increase (surge) in luteinising hormone (LH). This happens one day to two days before ovulation. A small amount of LH is always present in your blood and urine. But in the days before ovulation, the amount increases several times. The day before the LH surge until ovulation (12-24 hours after the start of the LH surge) is the most fertile time of your cycle. This is when you are most likely to conceive.

Most fertile time

The best time to attempt conception is when a woman's cervical mucus is wet, slippery and of egg white consistency, usually over a 2-3 day period. The last day of this fertile type mucus is usually the day of ovulation and should be followed by a temperature rise. The temperature rise confirms that ovulation has taken place. As sperm can live for up to 3-5 days it is best to try and have intercourse in the 2-3 days preceding and on the day of egg release (ovulation).

Be Fertility Fit

www.fertilitynz.org.nz
0800 333 306
support@fertilitynz.org.nz



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