

Optimizing Fertility

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Fertility is designed to work—the success of our species depends on it. However, when we get out of balance, it's the first thing to go. Here are 4 steps to help set your body up for optimal fertility:

- 1. Provide Nutritional Abundance**
 - a. Healthy fats
 - b. Dietary cholesterol
 - c. Nutrient dense foods
 - d. "Build the blood"
 - e. Stabilize blood sugar
- 2. Avoid Inflammation**
- 3. Rest & Manage Stress**
- 4. Ditch the Endocrine Disruptors**

Provide Nutritional Abundance

- Your body is smart. If there is even a hint of nutritional scarcity, your body knows it's not the best time to grow a baby, and it will triage resources away from reproduction.
- Unfortunately, our modern American diet, characterized by empty calories and fat-phobia, sends our body a signal of nutritional scarcity, even if we're overeating.
- To truly send the body a signal of nutritional abundance, we need to be consuming liberal amounts of healthy fats, dietary cholesterol and protein. We also need to be consuming all the vitamins, minerals and micronutrients our body needs to function optimally.
- This is a tall order, and our mainstream food system doesn't support this. The onus is on us as individuals to get proactive about nutrition.
- **Here's what we need to eat to achieve nutritional abundance:**
 - **Healthy Fats**
 - Grass-fed ghee and butter
 - Coconut oil
 - Fatty cuts of pasture-raised meat
 - Wild fatty fish (eat the skin)
 - Olive oil
 - Fish Oil (Rosita Foods Extra Virgin Cod Liver Oil www.evclo.com)
 - **Dietary Cholesterol**
 - Cholesterol is the backbone of our sex hormones
 - Get eggs from pastured chickens at the farmer's market
 - Eat the whole egg (or just the yoke)
 - Stop eating egg white omelets!
 - **Nutrient-Dense Foods**
 - Eat the most nutrient-dense foods to communicate nutritional abundance to your body
 - These foods are:
 - Organ meats
 - Egg yolks
 - Meat
 - Fish
 - Vegetables
 - Spices

- These foods are not:
 - Grains (even whole grains)
 - Sugar
 - Processed foods
- **“Build the Blood”**
 - This is a concept from Chinese Medicine
 - Consume foods that nourish your iron stores
 - Red meat from healthy, pastured animals (e.g., lamb, beef)
 - Bone broth
 - Bone marrow
- **Stabilize Blood Sugar**
 - Stable blood sugar is critical to proper HPA axis signaling (this is how our bodies orchestrate ovulation and fertility)
 - Do you experience blood sugar swings?
 - Do you get “hangry”? Do you experience anxiety? Do you wake up several times during the night? Do you crave something sweet or have an energy crash in the afternoon?
 - If you experience blood sugar swings, avoid sugar and refined carbohydrates, consume more protein and fat, and take a spoonful of coconut oil at least 3 times a day to stabilize blood sugar (upon waking, in the afternoon and before bed)

Avoid Inflammation

- There are two components to avoiding inflammation:
 - Avoid the substances causing inflammation
 - Soothe inflammation
- **Avoid the substances causing inflammation:**
 - Gluten
 - Industrially processed seed and vegetable oils (canola oil, corn oil, soybean oil, etc.)
 - +/- Dairy (varies by individual)
 - +/- Grains (varies by individual)
 - Sugar
- **Soothe inflammation:**
 - Turmeric supplementation
 - Fish oil supplementation (Rosita Foods Extra Virgin Cod Liver Oil www.evclo.com)
 - Heal the gut
 - Fermented foods
 - Starchy tubers
 - Bone broth
 - Avoid gluten, dairy, vegetable oils, sugar, alcohol, antibiotics, NSAIDs
 - Consider glutamine supplementation

Rest and Manage Stress

- We have lost touch with our bodies
- Conceiving, growing, birthing and nursing a baby is a massive energetic demand
- Again, our body is smart. If we send our body the signal that we’re running around, stressed, overscheduled, over-exercised, sleep deprived and treading water to keep up with our lives, the

body will wisely block fertility to protect our energy and to avoid producing compromised offspring.

- We can promote fertility by sending our body a signal of rest and ease. This is at odds with our culture, where we value productivity and discount the value of rest, and we pride ourselves on being busy and surviving on inadequate sleep.
- Some tips for sending your body the signal of rest:
 - o Sleep 8 hours per night
 - o Meditate
 - o Practice breathing exercises
 - o Do mind-body practices, such as yoga, tai chi, qi gong
 - o Play, rest, take a gentle walk
 - o Exercise less intensively

Ditch the Endocrine Disruptors

- Nearly every conventional product contains endocrine disrupting chemicals.
- Do a cleanse of your cleaning and personal care products (makeup, lotion, perfume, shampoo, hair gel, etc).
- Trash it all and switch over to products without artificial chemicals. Aim for a minimal personal care routine.

These are meant to be suggestions for optimizing fertility in conjunction with proper medical care. There are many possible causes of infertility. Be sure to work closely with your health care provider to examine all angles of your health and fertility.