

**Here are some simple steps to help ensure both partners are in the best physical condition to conceive and enjoy a healthy pregnancy.**

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**Maintain a healthy weight**

- ♂ A healthy body mass index (below 29kg/m<sup>2</sup>) is important for sperm health.
- ♀ It is recommended that women maintain a body mass index between 19–29kg/m<sup>2</sup> to maximise chances of conceiving.

**Limit alcohol & avoid smoking**

- ♂ Smoking and excessive alcohol consumption have been shown to lower sperm health.
- ♀ Smoking/passive smoking and alcohol are proven to severely harm pregnancy.

**Have regular sex at the right time**

- ♀ The most fertile time in a woman's cycle is leading up to ovulation.
- ♂♀ Sex every 2 – 3 days, and most importantly around 2 days before ovulation optimises the chances of pregnancy.

**Avoid tight-fitting underwear, hot baths & electric blankets**

- ♂ There is an association between elevated testes temperature and reduced sperm health.

**Talk to your doctor about vaccinations**

- ♀ Depending on your personal situation your doctor may recommend certain vaccinations prior to pregnancy.

**Ensure adequate nutrition**

- ♀ Women should ensure they get the right vitamins and minerals by taking a pregnancy supplement before conception. Pregnancy supplements containing folic acid should be taken as soon as you start trying for a baby to support healthy development. Folic acid is important as it may reduce the risk of neural tube defects like spina bifida.
- ♂ Men may wish to take a supplement that supports sperm health.

**Talk to your doctor about the prescription medicines you currently take**

- ♂ Some medicines can affect sperm health.
- ♀ Some prescription drugs affect female fertility and are not recommended during pregnancy.

**Avoid contact with chemicals at work & in the home**

- ♂♀ Pesticides, chemical fertilisers and petrochemicals can lower sperm quality and quantity and can also lead to pregnancy complications.

**Take time to relax and avoid stress**

- ♂♀ Stress can affect a couple's relationship and is likely to reduce libido and how often you have sex.