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8 Fertility Facts Every Woman Should Know

Because nearly one in six couples experience problems conceiving within a year of trying, more attention is being paid to fertility issues. Some experts are even calling this a modern "infertility epidemic." By understanding the potential causes of infertility and the available solutions, more couples can take control of their conception plans.



Dr. Lawrence B. ("The Werl") Werlin is a nationally noted specialist in reproductive endocrinology and infertility. Dr. Werlin is also the principal investigator for a number of studies that are paving the way for advances in reproductive medicine. Here he offers eight tips for good health and better odds of conception:

1. The Count Counts

We tend to associate fertility issues with female reproductive problems, but both partners should be checked out for potential problems, including a low or otherwise abnormal sperm count.

2. Double-Check the Plumbing

The smallest of blockages of the tubes that deliver either sperm or eggs can lead to major infertility problems. A thorough examination of these tubes may uncover a simple solution to fertility problems.

3. Prescriptions Aren't Always Your Friend

Certain medications have been linked to infertility. Couples looking to conceive may want to reevaluate their use of these medications and possibly decrease the number of medications they take.

4. Your Chances Don't Improve With Age

Much has been said about older women conceiving. In fact, Hollywood is fraught with examples of women giving birth well into their 40s. But the fact remains that as women age, their chances of conceiving a healthy child decrease dramatically.

5. Know Your Cycle

Your ovulation cycle, that is. If you are having trouble tracking your own ovulation cycle, speak with your doctor. Regular ovulation cycles can help increase a couple's chances of conception. Those with irregular ovulation cycles can sometimes be helped by prescription medications.

6. Find Ways to De-Stress

Don't underestimate the impact of everyday stress—from work, finances and more—on your ability to conceive. Sometimes a relaxing vacation is all a woman needs to elevate her energy and mood, and conceive.

7. Learn More about Your Family History

Your doctor needs to know if you have a family history of diseases (like hypothyroidism, for example). These conditions can affect hormone levels in your body, making it difficult to conceive.

8. Your Doctor is a Huge Resource

Sometimes more than one factor is at play when couples have trouble getting pregnant, but the good news is this: there are a myriad of tests that fertility specialists can do to help couples identify and isolate their fertility problems. Even better news? Four out of five couples experiencing fertility problems ultimately have their fertility problems diagnosed.

Dr. Lawrence B. Werlin is a nationally noted specialist in Reproductive Endocrinology and Infertility. He is founder and Medical Director of Coastal Fertility Medical Center in Irvine.

