

Nutrition For Your Healthy Pregnancy

Week 5 Fertility & Holistic Support for all Stages of Pregnancy



Julie Matthews is not a physician. She does not diagnose or treat disease. This information and her statements are not intended to replace a one-on-one relationship with a qualified health-care professional, and is not intended to provide medical advice. For medical advice, always seek a physician. This information is solely intended as a sharing of knowledge and information based upon the experience and research of Julie Matthews/Healthful Living.

The CDC and FDA warn against consuming raw dairy during pregnancy.

Causes of Infertility

- Mechanical
- Hormonal
- Idiopathic
 - Malnutrition, stress, toxins



Improving Fertility

- Reducing stress
- Eating a healthful diet
- Increasing nutrient reserves and herbs
- Reducing toxic exposure
- Understanding ovulation and conception
- Balancing hormones



Age

- A factor...
- But not the most important factor



Reducing Stress

- Meditation
 - Vipasana
 - Visualizations
 - Relaxation
- Breathing
- Yoga
- Exercise
- Eating well
- Acupuncture
- Cognitive Therapy



Reducing Exposure to Toxins

- Many toxins are endocrine disruptors
- Many cause miscarriages
- Some cause birth defects



Body Weight

- BMI under 22 or over 28 plays a role in infertility
- $703 \times \frac{\text{pounds}}{\text{Inches}^2}$
- A woman weighing 135 pounds and 5'4"
- $\text{BMI} = 703 \times \frac{135}{64 \times 64} = 23.17$



Fertility Nutrition

- **Calcium** enhances fertility
- **Magnesium** important for fertility
- **Vitamins A and D** essential for fertility
- **L-arginine**, an amino acid, helps improve circulation to the reproductive area
- **Antioxidants, green tea, vitamin C, vitamin E, zinc, and selenium**, help repair oxidative damage due to aging and environment.
- **Folic acid** assists in reduction of specific birth defects (neural tube defects) in children
- **Vitamins B6 and B12**, and minerals, iron, zinc and magnesium help address specific deficiencies and promote fertility health.



Herbs

- The herb, **Vitex** (chaste tree berry), enhances hormone balance and ovulation frequency. Often used by Naturopaths when FSH is elevated. Check contraindications for when not to use herbs such as this. Do not take when pregnant.
- **Female Toner Tea** by Traditional Medicinals helps to strengthen and tonify the uterus.



Male Fertility

- **L-carnitine**, an amino acid, critical to the formation of healthy sperm. Found in meat.
- **Acetyl L-carnitine**, sperm maturation and motility
- **Vitamins C and E, green tea and selenium** are all potent antioxidants that help improve sperm counts and quality and improve overall reproductive health
- **Zinc**, important for sperm production, motility, quality, as well as hormone metabolism.
- **B vitamins** (B6, B12 and folate) are critical nutrients in male reproductive systems for several benefits, including hormone metabolism, sperm formation and motility.
- **B12** is essential for methylation, a process that methylates DNA and turns on/off proper genes to ensure health. B12 deficiency adversely affects sperm speed and abnormality.
- **Folic Acid** is an essential part of DNA methylation,



Male Fertility

- **Selenium** is also important for proper sperm production, as well as for sperm motility and prevention of tail breakage. It protects the cells and sperm from damage. Supplementation of 100 mcg per day is helpful for infertility. Do not exceed 400 mcg per day from food and supplementation.
- **Vitamin A** influences sperm concentration and motility.
- **Vitamin E** help protect the cell membrane and DNA from damage. Supplementation of 400 IU per day is beneficial as it is often difficult to get full dose of vitamin E from food.
- **Vitamin C** protects the DNA from damage during its formation. Vitamin C also aids sperm count, motility and morphology (shape). Supplementing with 250-500 mg per day improves fertility.
- **Glutathione** is a powerful antioxidant and detoxifier. It aids sperm development. It's present in avocados, asparagus, tomatoes, strawberries, watermelon.
- **Omega-3**, especially DHA, is important for motility and DNA



Balancing Biochemistry and Hormones

- PCOS and insulin resistance
 - Balance blood sugar
- Endometriosis
 - Anti-inflammatory diet
 - Reduce sugar, refined carbohydrates, wheat, fried food, trans-fats
 - Anti-inflammatory foods: antioxidant fruits, alkalizing vegetables, grass-fed dairy, fish oil



Balancing Biochemistry and Hormones

- Estrogen dominance can cause lack of ovulation
 - Caused by excess weight, chronic stress, nutritional deficiencies, environmental toxins and estrogens in the food supply
- Low thyroid
 - Test free T3, reverse T3, T4, and auto-antibodies



Support endocrine system

- Thyroid
- Pancreas and blood sugar
- Adrenal and stress
- Immune system and inflammation
- Avoid: sugar, B-vitamin deficiencies, high insulin, plastics, bad fats, and caffeine



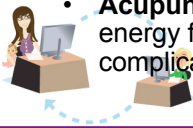
Additional Fertility Support

- Exercise
- Acupuncture
- Fertility Awareness



Holistic Support

- **Obstetrical care** – Talk to your practitioner (Doctor, Midwife, Nurse Midwife, etc.) about your interest in getting pregnant. She/he can discuss any health concerns or conditions with you before you get pregnant.
- **Doula (Birth Doula)** – A great member to have on your team. A doula is a someone to “mother the mother” (and partner) both for labor and postpartum. They are experienced with birth and can coach, support, and assist the mother and her partner during labor.
- **Postpartum Doula** supports the mother and family in the days and weeks after the birth, attending to anything from watching the baby while mom naps, cooking nourishing meals, washing laundry or dishes, and supporting the mother with her newborn needs.
- **Acupuncturist** – Can help you balance your hormones and energy for more success with conception, can assist in addressing complications during pregnancy, and can be helpful in labor.



Pregnancy Symptoms and Imbalances

Always seek medical advise
from a physician



Morning Sickness

- Hormonal shifts
- Poor nutrition
- Vitamin/mineral deficiencies
- Low blood sugar



Morning Sickness

- B6 - helps the liver process and breakdown used hormones
- Magnesium
- Ginger
- Nausea ease
- Poor nutrition
- Lack of exercise and stress
- Constipation
- Low blood sugar



Anemia

- Iron deficiency
- B12 or folic acid deficiency as well
- Floradix
- Iron-rich foods
 - Liver
 - Blackstrap molasses and lemon juice



Edema

- Swelling of the ankles
- Confirm from your doctor it is not preeclampsia
- Soak feet in a tub with epsom salt
- Nettle infusion with dandelion leaf
- Cucumber and watermelon
- Adequate amounts of protein
- Restrict processed foods high in sodium, but not all intake of salt. Moderate “nutritive salt” with potassium rich foods.



High Blood Pressure

- Always work with a physician
- Ovoid processed foods
- Drink plenty of water
- Good EFAs
- Garlic and onion
- Watermelon and cucumber
- Buckwheat
- Exercise, relaxation and visualization



Gestational Diabetes

- Have your blood sugar monitored by a physician
- Diet can be very helpful



Fatigue

- Sleep
- Hypnosis
- Address blood sugar
- Address anemia
- Pregnancy tea



Herb Safety Chart



Holistic Support

- **Nutrition Consultant** – If you have a preexisting medical condition such as diabetes you will want to work with a qualified nutrition consultant.
- **Chiropractor or Cranial Sacral Therapist** – Very helpful with comfort during pregnancy, can assist with turning the baby for breech positions, can assist with trauma to the baby's head during birth.
- **Dental care** – Gingivitis and other oral infections can lead to poorer maternal nutrition and may lead to preterm labor. Do not consume fluoride during preconception or pregnancy. Contrary to popular belief, fluoride actually leads to bone brittleness and is a toxin. Talk to your holistic dentist.
- **Homeopath** – Homeopathy can be helpful for fertility as well as pregnant and infant care as homeopathic medicines are much more gentle than traditional medicines.



Holistic Support

- **Energy and healing work** – There are dozens of different types of energy work that can help you balance your energy and release fear and trauma. Check out some different forms and see which resonates with you. Reiki, different forms of massage, bioenergy balancing are just a few forms of energy work beneficial to prepare you for pregnancy.
- **Naturopathic Doctor** – Naturopathic doctors (N.D.s) are newly licensed healthcare professionals in California. You'll want to check with your state. These doctors go to special medical schools geared toward using natural therapies as their tools of choice. Of course, because of this, they cannot prescribe medication, but can provide wonderful healthy alternatives to western medicine. Some specialize in women's health.
- **Psychiatrist or a Hypnotherapist** – Are effective if you are experiencing anxiety about getting pregnant or having a baby. The fetus will be able to sense your stress so work on as much as possible before conception.
- **Physical therapist or Personal trainer** – If you have back or pelvic problems you may want to consult a physical therapist. Additionally, a personal trainer can be very beneficial for those trying to get in shape and aid in the ease of carrying a baby once you get pregnant.
 - Yoga and Pilates



Questions?

See you next week...

