

TOP TIPS FOR OPTIMISING FERTILITY

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Welcome

An holistic approach is the best approach for fertility

I'm really pleased you've made it here – it suggests you've already realised that there is no one-size-fits-all approach to fertility and that you're looking for an holistic approach to the challenges you're facing. I help my clients work on optimising their fertility – for either natural or assisted conception.

Fertility is complex – it involves more than just your reproductive organs. It's not something that happens only in your ovaries but involves all your hormones, your gut, your head, your heart, immune system, nutrient stores...and more. Then there's your partner to think about too.

That's why a holistic approach is so successful – it looks at you as a whole person and examines your reproductive health, medical history, mental health, nutrition, toxins, movement, rest, and puts it all together to make the best plan for you. Understanding YOUR body and your root causes is VITAL.

I can't promise everyone a baby, but I can tell you that there is a lot we can influence and there is almost always hope.

Could something be holding you back?

Before we dive into some top tips for optimising fertility, let's think about some things that might be holding you back:

Not getting the right tests at the right time to understand even the basics of where your fertility is at – I include here the male partners not getting adequate sperm analysis in good time too.

Not taking the time to prepare your body and mind – you wouldn't go and take an important exam without preparing for it...would you?!

Following random diet after random diet or losing lots of weight really quickly.

Taking random and low quality supplements "for fertility".

·Blaming the random diet or supplements for "not working".

Blaming yourself.

Trying to do everything that might help, then feeling miserable and guilty because it's too difficult.

Letting go of intimacy outside of baby-making sex.

Not knowing your own, individual root causes.

Thinking what "worked" for someone else will work for you too.

Thinking "It's OK, we can always do IVF".

“ What my clients say about their experiences ”

"I just wanted to say a huge thank you for your treatment and support. After such a long journey with unexplained infertility I feel like as soon as I started my treatment with you everything started to slot into place and you have been a significant part of my success story this year. I just wish I had found you sooner and if we ever decide to try for a sibling for our little miracle I will certainly turn to acupuncture again"
Mrs G

"I contacted Judy after struggling to conceive and being diagnosed with Polycystic Ovary Syndrome. I felt depressed about the situation and let down my traditional western medicine. I was immediately impressed by Judy's understanding and professional reply, which made me certain she was the right person to come and see. Judy not only takes the time to take a full history, including medical details, but also to understand you as a person, which I think is invaluable. Her amazing acupuncture skills lead to me ovulating as normal. A combination of acupuncture and Judy's insight resulted in me feeling significantly less stressed and thus more open-minded. I absolutely credit Judy for the success of the treatment. I had sessions over a three-four month period and am now expecting a baby. I would recommend Judy to anyone. I'm looking forward to returning to acupuncture to prepare me for the birth of my baby, and will miss her when I'm not having regular sessions any more."

Mrs W

Seven starter tips for optimising fertility



1. Understand your fertility

Get some basic tests done early on. It breaks my heart when people come to see me and say they've been trying for 2 years without success. They haven't had any investigations done yet because they don't want the intrusion. We get some tests and find that hormone levels are sub-optimal and the male partner's sperm is low. That is two years wasted and a lot of stress and anxiety accumulated. In the UK, the NHS will typically undertake baseline fertility blood tests and sperm analysis after 12 months of trying to conceive. But you can get them done privately. Tests do not have to commit you to anything, they are just measures at a given point in time. But they are tremendously helpful sources of information and even if the results are not optimal it is far better to know sooner rather than later.

2. Prepare to succeed

Whilst for some, getting pregnant is effortless, the reality is that this is not always the case. Many bodies need adequate preparation before they can healthily create, nourish and sustain a new life. Fertility starts with healthy parents. And healthy parents make healthy babies. It's ironic because so many people are reluctant to properly prepare their bodies for conception because they feel they are running out of time and can't wait any longer.

Unfortunately this is a false economy and failure to adequately prepare can mean it takes longer to get and stay pregnant. Three to four months preparation time is usually enough for most people - the process of folliculogenesis (egg development and production) takes around 100 days and the process of spermatogenesis (sperm development and production) also takes around 100 days. If you only influence a part of that cycle, you won't be fully optimising your chances. Working on improving fertility, educating miscarriage and supporting IVF, needs different and more individual preparation than just adopting a generally healthy lifestyle. But when you know exactly what to eat, what supplements to take, what to avoid, how to exercise, how to use your mindset....you can make significant transformations which can make it easier to get and stay pregnant whilst also enhancing your long-term health and well-being.

3. Avoid hormone disruptors

Hormone disruptors are things like pesticides, plastics, chemicals and preservatives - things the body wasn't designed to deal with. They are not naturally found in the body and they interfere with the production, release and transport of naturally occurring hormones. It's worth limiting your exposure. Opting for organic food as much as possible, and getting rid of all your plastic tupperware (and replacing with glass) are great starting points.

4. Eat regularly to balance your blood sugar

if you eat an irregular diet at irregular times, you will cause your blood sugar and insulin levels to spike and dip on a regular basis. Doing this, you create massive disruptions elsewhere in your body – your brain, your gut, your hormones. You can create inflammation, disrupt the immune system, have a negative impact on egg quality and lots more. The simplest thing you can do is make sure you eat a good breakfast, never skip meals and keep well hydrated throughout the day.

5. Manage your mindset

Learning and practicing simple mindfulness and compassion techniques can help put you in the driving seat so that you are in control of your mind rather than your mind being in control of you. This can be as simple as spending a couple of minutes a day writing a gratitude diary, or can build into longer meditation practices. Even small pockets of time spent 'being' rather than 'doing' can make a difference. Reproduction takes a lot of resources and our brains and bodies are programmed to preserve energy for survival above all else. So if they don't feel well-resourced, reproduction will be put on the back burner. Seeking out small moments of pleasure is a great way to start - sing along to your favourite song, dance around your kitchen, or

study the view and breathe for a few minutes – anything that grounds you and helps you feel safe. That's when you heal and your body can start fixing things.

6. Check the quality of your vitamin supplements

Vitamins can be a bit of a mine field. There's plenty of choice, but little understanding of whether what you're taking is a good one or not – if it says it's a pre-natal vitamin, it should have all the right things in....right? Not necessarily. Some of the prenatal vitamins have such small quantities of the important ingredients that they will not have much effect. Above all, I recommend getting as many of your vitamins and minerals from a good diet. But most people start out deficient in something and you've got to start somewhere, so I often recommend a course of good quality vitamins.

If nothing else, you should be taking 400 micrograms of folic acid every day (in the form of Methylfolate) – many multi-vitamins include this already so take care not to double up.

Vitamins are really important for men too. It's also worth thinking about a short course of good quality probiotics to repopulate the gut, helping to modulate the immune system. If you're taking so many supplements that you're starting to rattle, it's worth consulting a nutritionist so you can get tailored advice on what your body really needs.

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"I've been having treatment with Judy for a year now and she has changed my life. I initially went to improve my fertility but soon realised that acupuncture was wonderful for my general well being whether I were to fall pregnant or not. Emotionally and physically my sessions with Judy have benefitted me beyond all expectations and have helped me to manage my stress levels at work and try to approach my life differently. I have no doubt that the time I have invested with Judy has enabled my body to improve and become ready to conceive. I am now happily 5 months pregnant and am convinced it is largely down to my acupuncture sessions. Thank you Judy." Mrs L

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7. Get support from a specialist acupuncturist for at least 3 months

Studies show that acupuncture drives blood flow to the reproductive organs leading to healthier follicles and sperm, supports healthy ovulation, supports IVF and IUI outcomes, balances hormones and reduces rates of miscarriage. Acupuncture not only helps with stress but also supports and encourages egg health, healthy reproductive circulation, a healthy uterine lining for a strong implantation, hormonal balance and much more.

You can powerfully impact your fertility with these simple steps. But to be clear, these are just the tip of the iceberg.

Many of my clients have unique hurdles to figure out and overcome. That's where I can help.

One final note: I'm often asked why I haven't included anything here about nutrition or diet, or advice on what you should or shouldn't eat. That's deliberate.

There's no doubt that what you eat and how you eat can have a positive or negative impact on your fertility. But what is good for one person is not good for another, depending on what their underlying patterns are, and it is all too easy to fuel yet more anxiety by adding to the "should" and "should not" lists. I advocate always knowing your root causes – once you know those, nutrition advice can be tailored to suit.

Thanks for reading.

With warmest wishes,



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"Judy creates a professional and peaceful environment. I originally went for support during IVF treatment. Her knowledge and care throughout this time was a massive support and comfort. Having found the treatment so beneficial I continued to see Judy on a long-term basis. The sense of tranquility, relaxation and well-being I have felt is one of a kind. Thanks for everything Judy, Somerset will be lucky to have you!". Ms H

"You listen well, empathise and show a clear warmth towards your clients. You maintain a professional approach at all times. I feel very safe in your hands and trust your clinical judgement and practice."

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