

MOTHERLAND

Supporting Healthy Fertility



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EGGLESTON

Whether you are preparing yourself for future pregnancy or have been trying to conceive, you can enhance your chances of conceiving by improving your overall health and hormonal balance. Our hormonal system is complex and getting to know your cycles can be a very empowering part of supporting fertility. It gives us the opportunity to

understand exactly when our body is most fertile, increasing the chances of pregnancy.

GETTING TO KNOW YOUR BODY

How often do we give our body credit for the amazing functions that it performs for us? We are more concerned when it goes wrong and criticize it for not fitting into our clothes. This is an opportunity to get to know our bodies more and honour the incredible ways in which it supports us.

Not all of us have regular 28 day cycles. Learning the signs of fertility can help your own body, such as monitoring cervical fluid, waking temperature, and cervical position. While this sounds daunting it is easy and empowering once you get into the routine. There are many resources that can easily teach you how to do this.

FERTILITY THROUGH IMPROVED HEALTH

By supporting your overall health and wellbeing, you are preparing your body for conception and increasing the chances of pregnancy. Moderate levels of exercise, healthy body weight, restful sleep and healthy nutrition all improve fertility. Eliminate the unhealthy habits such as smoking, excess alcohol and caffeine. Change does not happen overnight so having a long term plan to support health changes is mandatory. Be compassionate with yourself for where you are now, as it is just the starting point.

STRESS IN OUR LIVES

Chronic stress plays havoc on the hormonal system. Cortisol is



a stress hormone that sends a signal to the body warning us - we are feeling threatened. This is not the ideal time for pregnancy. The scientific reason for this is that the precursor for the cortisol stress hormone is the same as for the sex hormones. Cortisol affects the intricate balance of our hormonal system. This also contributes to a low libido when we feel stressed out.

Women often put everyone ahead of themselves and our own self care seems to come last. Give yourself permission to take care of yourself and listen to what your body, mind and spirit need.

Sometimes the idea of fertility and can be stressful, especially if you have had emotional experience - miscarriage, sexual abuse, abortion, infertility. Professional help will support you in dealing with these issues. Meditation is also a wonderful tool to unwind, relax and work through difficult emotions. *Preparation for Conception*, by Francesca Naish is an excellent reference source for meditation.

NUTRITION FOR BALANCED HORMONES

The foods you eat are the building blocks of your cellular health. Focus on a whole food diet rich in vegetables, fruit, whole grains, nuts, seeds, lean protein, and unrefined oil. Choose organic food as much as possible.

Specific foods that support hormonal balance include cruciferous vegetables; broccoli, kale, cabbage and cauliflower.

These super foods contain a natural compound called indole-3-carbinol which support estrogen metabolism. Steam them before eating is ideal. Ground flaxseeds are a good source of phytoestrogens which also help support hormonal balance.

Some foods decrease the vitality of our fertility. Avoid refined sugar and carbohydrates - white sugar and flour, processed food. Junk foods can aggravate conditions such as Polycystic Ovarian Syndrome and other hormonal concerns that impact fertility.

If your food is deficient in the essential nutrients your body requires for optimal health and fertility, you may need an extra boost through supplements, such as omega-3 fatty acids, B vitamins, folic acid or zinc. Not all vitamin and mineral supplements are created equal. I recommend a good quality, whole food prenatal vitamin for conception preparation. Avoid the cheap, generic brand products. They do not get absorbed well and are often full of synthetic inert fillers.

WHEN THE BIRDS AND BEES ARE QUIET

Trying unsuccessfully to conceive is incredibly stressful and heartbreaking, but modern medicine has many options for increasing conception. Often women suffer with hormonal related concerns such as painful, irregular periods or PCOS, and do not realize that these are signs of imbalance in the system that can be corrected to support fertility. Many women are finding support through therapies such as acupuncture and botanical medicine which now have scientific evidence to support thousand of years of efficacy.

It is an empowering journey to understand our bodies and know we can strengthen our own fertility. There is much we can do to improve our reproductive health and support a balanced hormonal system. ♀

RESOURCES:

Fertility Friend. www.fertilityfriend.com.

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