



HOW TO IMPROVE FERTILITY NATURALLY

Acupuncture and Chinese herbal medicine are powerful tools to help regulate the hypothalamus, pituitary, and ovaries. Both acupuncture and herbs also help to improve blood flow to the reproductive organs and create hormonal balance. As a result, you also become more balanced physically and emotionally in preparation for conception.

In order to improve your fertility, it is important to keep your body well nourished with a whole foods diet. It is also important to keep your stress levels to a minimum (acupuncture is wonderful for this), make good lifestyle choices, get adequate rest, deal with unresolved emotions, and center yourself emotionally. We want to create the optimal environment in which to create another life. Below are some recommendations based on the principles of Chinese medicine to boost your chances of conceiving.

NUTRITION

- Good nutrition is essential for the health of the baby and future adult.
- Good nutrition increases fertility, helps implantation and early development of the embryo, and reduces the chance of miscarriage.
- Poor nutrition of the mother before and during pregnancy causes an increase in the chance of heart disease, diabetes, stroke and hypertension in their offspring.

DIET

- The best diet to promote fertility is comprised of:
 - high protein foods
 - low glycemic index foods*
 - warming foods that are easy to digest (i.e. soups, steamed foods, stirfry, stews, etc.)

Avoid high glycemic foods including fruit juices, breads, starchy foods like potatoes, sweets, and baked goods. These types of foods lack the fiber, fat and protein needed to moderate the release of sugar.

Low glycemic foods include **oatmeal, beans and vegetables**, which are packed with fat, fiber and protein and cause a slow, steady digestion, leading to a longer period of satiety.



FOODS TO AVOID

- Cold raw foods & ice cold drinks (i.e. ice cream, salads)
 - Excessive intake of cold and raw foods may be harmful to the digestive system and creates a cold stagnation that may impede fertility.
- Soy
 - Soy is very cold in nature, is genetically modified and can create excess estrogen in the body, causing a hormone imbalance that may lead to fertility problems.
- Sugar & refined carbohydrates
 - Sugar and refined carbs cause a rapid spike in blood sugar which causes us to “crash” and feel fatigued. To avoid this, eat foods from the low GI index and avoid skipping meals.

WEIGHT & FERTILITY

- Fertility is the highest and pregnancy is most successful when the mother’s BMI (body mass index) is between **20 & 25**.
- Overweight women (BMI 27 and above) are 300% less likely to conceive and are much more likely to miscarry if they conceive.
- Underweight women (BMI 17 or below) are 50% less likely to conceive.

AVOID CAFFEINE

- Studies show that **the risk of infertility is 55% higher for women drinking just 1 cup of coffee per day** (100% higher for women drinking 1.5 – 3 cups per day and 176% higher for more than 3 cups per day!)
- Women who consume 4 or more cups of coffee per day have an 80% higher risk of still birth.
- Consumption of caffeine (300mg or more per day) can lead to fertility problems.
- Coffee drinking in men and women increases miscarriage rates.
- High caffeine intake in women slows the rate of conception.
 - ALTERNATIVE: Switch to caffeine-free herbal teas

AVOID ALCOHOL

- Excessive alcohol consumption is associated with altered estrogen and progesterone levels, menstrual irregularities, increased incidence of endometriosis, abnormalities in the ovaries and the early onset of menopause.
- Moderate drinking by women (5-10 drinks per week) is linked to lower fertility and increased miscarriage.



REDUCE STRESS

Stress can affect our bodies in a number of different ways. It is especially important when trying to conceive that we keep our stress levels at a minimum. Chronic stress may lead to hormonal imbalances, irregular menstrual cycles and infertility. The mind has a huge impact on how the body functions.

Make time for daily meditation to calm and center yourself.

Acupuncture is very effective to help patients manage stress and regulate the nervous system.

ESSENTIAL OILS

Essential oils are also great to help keep the body relaxed. Specific oils for stress & hormone balancing include: Lavender, Geranium and Ylang Ylang.