



Trying to Conceive

Tips for Success

You want to have a baby. But did you know there are only about six days a month during which you can become pregnant? Sometimes, the simplest things can help you conceive. Consider the following tips:

- **Avoid smoking and drinking while you're trying to conceive. Even moderate alcohol intake and secondhand smoke can affect your fertility.**
- **Eat a healthy diet, get enough sleep and avoid stress.**
- **Make sure you get 400 mcg of Vitamin B (folic acid) on a daily basis, even before conception. This reduces the risk of birth defects.**
- **Avoid douching. While trying to conceive, the chemicals in over-the-counter or homemade douches may cause an imbalance in your vaginal secretions. This could be harmful to sperm.**
- **Avoid water-soluble jelly lubricants (they may be spermicidal).**

Helpful Positions and Timing

Sperm can live for three days inside the uterus and fallopian tubes. But your egg, or ovum, is only fertile for a 24-hour period. By making love more often around the time you should be ovulating, you can increase the chances of conception.

The closer ejaculation takes place to the cervix the better the chances of becoming pregnant. Some sexual positions allow the penis to be closer to the cervix. Using a pillow under your hips during the missionary position can help achieve this. Keep your hips raised for 30 minutes after lovemaking and gravity will encourage the sperm to swim into the uterus. Also, if your partner is behind you, the penis can get much closer to the cervix during ejaculation.



For Men Only

Sperm are sensitive to heat. To keep sperm cool and mobile, men can try the following tips:

- **Wear loose-fitting trousers.**
- **Avoid tight underwear. Consider switching to boxers.**
- **Stay away from saunas, hot tubs and hot baths or showers.**
- **Frequent ejaculating affects the number of sperm. Abstain until a few days before ovulation.**
- **Check with your doctor to see if any medications could affect sperm production.**
- **Avoid tobacco, drugs and alcohol completely before trying to conceive. They can reduce sperm count and damage sperm.**
- **Avoid cottonseed oil, which is found in many processed foods and salad dressings. (Cottonseed oil is used as a method of birth control in some countries.)**