

NATUROPATHIC TIPS **for** **OPTIMIZING FERTILITY**

- **Prepare Ahead with Detoxification**

Ideally, you and your partner should take 3 to 6 months ahead of trying to conceive to do a thorough cleanse. This amount of time also allows you to monitor your cycles and correct any hormonal imbalances. Eating a variety of whole foods, while limiting the amount of 'sensitive' foods will help you to detox. Your plate should have ½ of it covered with brightly-coloured veggies, ¼ with whole grain and the other ¼ with lean protein.

- **Consider Full-Fat Dairy**

If you are not sensitive to dairy, try eating one serving of full-fat dairy per day. It has been shown to improve fertility.

- **Keep Hydrated**

It is crucial to be properly hydrated. One calculation of daily water intake involves dividing body weight in pounds into 2. This number is the number of ounces of water per day that you should be drinking.

- **Love your Liver**

Your liver is a key organ in detoxification of metabolic wastes, toxins – and hormones. It is essential for hormonal balance and fertility to have a happily functioning liver. To optimize liver function, you should eat brassica vegetables (cabbage, broccoli, brussel sprouts, kale) as well as beets, onions, garlic, and leeks. Turmeric also protects your liver in addition to being a potent anti-inflammatory agent.

- **Key Supplements**

Essential Fatty Acids (Omega 3, 6, 9) – Reduces inflammation, important part of nervous system, helps with hormonal balance

Zinc & Vitamin C – Particularly important for men's sexual health, but also good for women to consume

B Vitamins, esp Folate -- Folate is important in the development of the fetal nervous system. When planning to conceive, the biological mother should consume at least 1000 mcg daily. The best food sources of folate include dark leafy greens and orange juice.

Calcium & Magnesium – Adequate calcium and magnesium have been shown to be important for fertility.

- **Herbal Help**

Although many herbs are contraindicated in pregnancy and nursing, there are some plants that can be quite helpful during this time. Traditional Chinese herbal formulas are effective in the preparation to conceiving. Western herbs, such as nettles and red raspberry, are high in vitamins and minerals and help to prepare the uterus for labour.

- **Positive Mental Outlook & Managing Stress**

Trying to conceive is an exciting and potentially stressful time. To optimize fertility, it is essential to do something on a daily basis that helps you to relax. Although meditation is a potent way to manage stress, you can also do something else that focuses your concentration, such as walking your dog, knitting, writing in a journal, making crafts, or yoga. Be creative!

- **Exercise**

For moderately active women, it is safe to maintain your current level of aerobic activity. Exercise not only improves fitness, but also helps to deal with stress in a positive way. For women with intense exercise regimens, such as marathon runners or triathletes, they may have to reduce the intensity and/or frequency of exercise.