While these tips are all designed to improve general health in preparation for conception, often even the most dedicated lifestyle efforts aren’t enough to help couples conceive. According to RESOLVE.org and the American Society for Reproductive Medicine, you should seek the care of a specialist if you are unable to achieve pregnancy after 12 months of unprotected intercourse (if the women is under the age of 35), or six months if the women is more than 35 years of age. You should also seek the care of a specialist if you have had more than one miscarriage. For more information, support, and resources, visit http://resolve.org.

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AN OVERVIEW

Are you thinking about becoming pregnant in the future? At Whole30 Healthy Mama, Happy Baby, we are passionate about supporting you through all stages of motherhood, including preconception, or the period of time before getting pregnant. It can feel overwhelming to know where to start as you consider this big change in your life. Steph Greunke, Registered Dietician and co-creator of Whole30 Healthy Mama, Happy Baby, created this preconception health guide to help you know where to start.

Contents:
1. Diagnostic tests
2. Stress reduction
3. Sleep
4. Whole foods diet
5. Supplementation
6. Exercise
7. Eliminate environmental toxins
8. Explore resources in your community
9. Male preconception health

1. Diagnostic tests for preconception health

Work with your provider to determine which test(s) you need. These are some of the ones I recommend to get a better understanding of your health and determine a solid game plan for optimizing your health.

- Dutch Test (hormone testing)
- MTHFR
- Homocysteine
- Ferritin
- Vitamin D
- CBC with differential
- CMP
- Full thyroid panel (Free and Total T3/T4, TSH*, Reverse T3, Thyroid Antibodies)

- Heavy metal testing, optional
- Spectracell or Genova nutrient testing, optional
- Stool testing, optional
- AMH hormone levels, depending on the situation
- HSG, to know the health of your fallopian tubes, depending on the situation
- Semen analysis, depending on the situation

*According to the American Thyroid Association, a TSH of 2.5 mIU/L been accepted as the upper limit of normal for TSH in the first trimester. Make sure your TSH is <2.5 before conceiving. If you need help understanding your labwork and/or your partner’s semen analysis and aren’t satisfied with your current provider’s recommendations, you can check out this program.
2. Stress reduction

WHAT THE RESEARCH SAYS

A 2014 study in *Fertility and Sterility* concluded that stress can diminish male sperm count and motility. A 2014 study in *Human Reproduction* found that women with elevated salivary alpha-amylase (a marker for chronic elevated stress) had more than double the risk of infertility.

What this means...

Our brains have a hard time differentiating the stress of being chased by a bear and the stress of being late for an appointment. Stress = stress. We’re wired to handle a low stress load and bounce back from individual stressors, but in our current world of constant technology and hustle, we’re experiencing chronic, high-level stress with frequent individual stressors. This can lead to issues in multiple areas of our health, including our fertility.

Take away...

Chronic, elevated stress messes with your reproductive capabilities. Your body will always choose survival over procreation.

WHAT TO DO ABOUT IT

Put your own oxygen mask on first. It’s really important that you prioritize self-care during this time. Here are a few suggestions:

Schedule time for yourself

I purchased a monthly massage membership at Massage Envy to make sure I took time each month to get a massage. It seems crazy that I needed a monthly membership fee to keep myself accountable for getting a massage, but life gets busy and sometimes you don’t prioritize your health. If massages aren’t your thing, schedule a ladies night with your friends, a relaxing pedicure, a fun rock climbing adventure, or whatever makes you happy!

Take a morning and/or evening walk

If you have to be at work super early, take a short lap around your block. If that’s not an option, take a nice stroll around your neighborhood after work. Bonus: morning exposure to sunlight helps regulate your circadian rhythm which helps you sleep better and boosts your energy levels! An after-dinner walk can help promote healthy blood sugar levels.
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Understand that "no" is a complete sentence

Many women tend to be people pleasers. It’s okay to say “no” to unnecessary events, tasks, and extra responsibilities that don’t bring you joy.

Take 10

If self-care feels like it’s more stressful to you than enjoyable, simply consider giving yourself ten minutes. We all have ten minutes where we can stop what we’re doing, close our eyes, maybe lay down, and rest our brains. If you’re up for it and it’s an option, consider using a diffuser with lavender essential oil and dimming the lights; however, know that even simply closing your eyes in your cubicle for ten minutes is great!

Counting meditation

Meditation – you either love it or can’t stand it. I personally WANT to love it, but have a hard time doing it consistently. I make it work by doing a simple counting meditation. I simply close my eyes, turn my attention to my breath, and breathe comfortably in and out of my nose while counting, allowing one breath for each number. If my mind wanders, I start again. No biggie! You can start by counting to ten and then working up to a larger number, if desired. If you just can’t get on board with breathing exercises or meditation, there’s always yoga, walks, or affirmations. Do what you love!

Write it down

Keep a notebook with you and/or by your bed to get your thoughts on paper. Having too many things on your mind that you have to remember is an easy way to ramp up stress. Journal how you’re feeling, keep an organized calendar, do whatever works for you to have less clutter in your brain.

3. Sleep

One could argue that getting adequate sleep is even more important than your diet; however, that doesn’t mean Twinkies are a go if you’re sleeping like a rock. Sleep deprivation has significant negative implications on your reproductive system. It can disrupt your cycle and ovulation, and thus your ability to conceive. It also negatively impacts your stress hormones, blood sugar, hunger signals, and weight. And men need it too! Men who sleep poorly (generally sleeping less than 5 hours) and/or have interrupted sleep tend to have lower levels of testosterone and lower sperm counts.

Action step

Shoot for at least eight hours of sleep per night. If you’re having difficulty sleeping, work with a provider to determine the cause and implement strategies for promoting better sleep. This could include: going to bed earlier (start with 15 minutes earlier each night until you bank eight hours total), avoiding artificial light from screens and dimming the lights at least an hour prior to bedtime, creating a sleep routine to ease you into sleep, and eating dinner earlier so you’re not going to bed stuffed.
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4. Whole foods diet

There’s no doubt that a healthy diet centered around whole foods is important for your health. I’ve written about the beneficial effects your diet has on your health during the preconception period on our blog at mamas.whole30.com.

Also, it’s important to consider the fact that many women are entering pregnancy with nutrient deficits. This is an important consideration since we don’t know how your first trimester will go (with nausea, aversions, cravings). Thus, we want to optimize nutrient stores before you conceive so you have plenty of nutrients to see you through those tough days. Choosing a whole foods diet will also help balance your blood sugar levels and reduce inflammation, which is incredibly important for preconception health, especially if you have diabetes, PCOS, or endometriosis.

While the Whole30 provides a solid framework for your diet, we definitely don’t want you stressing about Whole30-ing throughout your entire preconception and pregnancy. Do your best to incorporate a variety of whole foods while enjoying your food freedom.

**Things to limit/avoid:**

- Refined/artificial sugar
- Alcohol
- Soy
- Gluten
- Vegetable oils and trans fats
- Most processed foods
- Caffeine (in amounts greater than 300mg per day)
- GMOs (avoid corn, soy, canola, and sugar from sugar beets)

**FOODS TO FOCUS ON:**

1. Homemade bone broth

**Amount:**

1 cup a day (or more!). You can substitute this with 1-2 scoops of collagen peptides if you can’t stand the smell/taste of broth.

**Nutrient content:**

Provides gelatin, collagen, glucosamine, chondroitin, calcium, magnesium, potassium, phosphorus, and trace minerals

**How to consume it:**

- Drink as you would a cup of coffee or tea (plain or mixed with ghee or coconut oil)
- Add it to soups, stews, smoothies, and other recipes

**Why it’s important:**

- Contributes to gut health
- Builds a healthy uterine lining
- Promotes healthy joints, bones, and skin
- Supports adrenal health
- Supports your immune system
Foods to Focus on Cont...

2. Organic* leafy greens
(e.g., arugula, broccoli, collard greens, dandelion greens, kale, lettuces, mustard greens, spinach, swiss chard)
*Choose organic when you can since leafy greens tend to be heavily contaminated with pesticide residues.

Amount:
At least 2 cups/day

Nutrient content:
Antioxidants, vitamin C, iron, calcium, folate, magnesium, fiber, chlorophyll

How to consume them:
• Salads, in eggs or a frittata, sauté them with ghee, lemon juice, and garlic

Why they're important:
• Folate helps prevent neural tube defects and is critical during the first four weeks, so it's wise to ensure adequate intake prior to conception and in early pregnancy
• Helps support your liver's detox processes
• Fiber helps keep you full and promotes gut health
• Vitamin C helps your body absorb iron

3. Eggs
When you can, choose pastured or organic eggs

Amount:
At least 2-3 eggs per day

Nutrient content:
Choline, vitamins A, D, E, and K2, B vitamins like folate and biotin

How to consume them:
• Scrambled, fried, poached, hard-boiled, in a frittata, on top of anything!

Why it's important:
• Only 10% of Americans are meeting the required daily amount of choline
• Choline contributes to baby's brain and neurological development
• Choline is essential for making phosphatidylcholine which is a component of the membrane in every single cell in your body
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FOODS TO FOCUS ON CONT...

4. Fatty fish, low in mercury
(Sardines, wild salmon, anchovies, herring, SafeCatch tuna)
Note: choose BPA-free cans, if available (canned wild salmon with bones is a great source of calcium!); Choose wild-caught fish

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Amount:</th>
<th>Why they’re important:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10-12 oz/week</td>
<td>• Anti-inflammatory – important for preconception health!</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nutrient content:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Omega-3 fats (EPA + DHA), calcium and other bone-building minerals, selenium, iodine</td>
<td>• Contributes to the brain and visual development of your baby</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Can help boost your baby’s IQ, reduce “mommy brain” and keep your mood more stable</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Reduces your risk of pregnancy complications such as pre-eclampsia, gestational diabetes, postpartum depression, and preterm delivery</td>
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<tr>
<th>How to consume them:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Canned fish: straight out of the can, mixed with olive oil and lemon juice or avocado and lemon juice, hot sauce, or tomato sauce</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Salmon: salmon salad (salmon mixed with mayo); baked with mango salsa, pesto, or melted ghee on top; sprinkled with lemon-garlic seasoning</td>
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5. Liver
(Supplemental cod liver oil, liver capsules, or through food)

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<tr>
<th>Amount:</th>
<th>Why it’s important:</th>
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<tr>
<td>• Beef liver – no more than 3 oz/week</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Chicken liver – no more than 3 oz, 2x/week</td>
<td>• Liver is 10-100 times more nutrient-dense than muscle meat</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nutrient content:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vitamins A, D, E, K2, folate, B12, iron, zinc, selenium</td>
<td>• It’s considered a “multivitamin” due to its nutrient-density</td>
</tr>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>How to consume it:</th>
<th>What you need to know:</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Blended in other meat dishes (use ground or finely chopped liver)</td>
<td>• Vitamin A from food acts completely differently in the body than vitamin A from supplements, so the mainstream concerns over vitamin A toxicity is often misunderstood; however, a small amount goes a long way.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Sauteed with caramelized onions and/or a few slices of bacon</td>
<td>• Choose liver from healthy animals only!</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
FOODS TO FOCUS ON CONT...

6. Fermented foods

(e.g., sauerkraut, kimchi, lacto-fermented veggies, kombucha, kvass, kefir, yogurt)

*Note: Make sure you're purchasing live cultures. The label should say “raw” or “fermented,” and it should be refrigerated

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Amount:</th>
<th>Why they're important:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Daily, a few tablespoons and/or fluid oz.</td>
<td>• Promotes gut health and supports your immune system</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nutrient content:</td>
<td>• Reduces the risk of allergies/asthma and skin issues for mom and baby</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>probiotics</td>
<td>• Reduces your risk of UTI and other infections that may require antibiotics</td>
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<tr>
<td>How to consume them:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Add 1/2 T. (or up to 1/2 cup, if you want) of sauerkraut or kimchi to your meals</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Drink kombucha as an afternoon pick me up</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Have kefir or yogurt with fruit and nuts for breakfast or as a snack</td>
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7. Organic, grass-fed butter & ghee

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<th>Amount:</th>
<th>Why it's important:</th>
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</thead>
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<tr>
<td>Daily, a few tablespoons</td>
<td>• Promotes healthy hormone levels</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nutrient content:</td>
<td>• Provides fat-soluble vitamins that are important for immunity, gene expression, bone production, and reproduction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vitamins A, D, E, and K2, DHA, iodine, selenium</td>
<td>• Regulates blood sugar and promotes satiety</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How to consume it:</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Saute your veggies in ghee (Bonus: Fat boosts the absorption of nutrients from your veggies)</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Mix with pureed veggies</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Use in place of other cooking oils</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Eat straight out of the package. I won't judge.</td>
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8. Optional: full-fat dairy*

*Note: The research is mixed with this one; however if you tolerate it and choose to include it in your preconception plan, make sure you choose full-fat, unsweetened, organic, grass-fed sources.
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5. Supplementation

*Note: You can find these at my Fullscript account: https://www.healthwavehq.com/welcome/sgreunke*

As always, talk to your provider before starting any supplements.

1. Prenatal

- Make sure it contains choline, iodine, iron, and folate (5-MTHF, not folic acid)! Whole food based prenatails are often better tolerated for those with a sensitive stomach. Make sure to take your prenatal with food.
- Brand: Innate Response Baby & Me or MegaFood Baby & Me

2. Vitamin D3/K2

- Ideally, get your blood level tested to understand your needs; however, many women are deficient in vitamin D, so consider taking at least 1-2,000 IU/day until you’ve received your blood work. D3/K3 work synergistically in the body and like vitamin D, there aren’t many food sources of K2, so I like to pair these together in a drop.
- Brand: Ortho Molecular or Thorne Vitamin D3/K2 drops

3. Fish oil

- Don’t go cheap with this one. Quality is really important. If you’re eating at least 12 oz of fatty fish consistently each week, you can skip it.
- Brand: Nordic Naturals

4. Probiotic

- A healthy digestive system is the foundation of our health. A healthy vaginal fluid pH encourages optimal cervical mucous for conception. Consuming fermented foods daily is a fantastic idea and a probiotic supplement can help fill the gaps with additional strains that may be missing in the foods you’re eating.
- Brand: Klaire Labs Ther-Biotic Complete or Prescript Assist

5. Magnesium

- Statistics suggest that least half of the US population consumes less magnesium than what’s recommended. Since magnesium is required for hundreds of biochemical reactions that are constantly occurring inside our cells, we need to ensure sufficiency.
- Brand: Magnesium Glycinate by Pure Encapsulations or Ancient Minerals oil/lotion
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6. Greens Formula (optional)

- To support your immune, nervous, and digestive systems. These products contain vitamins, minerals, essential amino acids, antioxidants, chlorophyll, fiber, and tens of thousands of phytonutrients from organic greens. This is a great supplement option to add to your healthy diet.
- Brand: Garden of Life’s Perfect Food or Health Force’s Vitamineral Green

7. Progesterone Boosts (optional)*

*My colleague, Dr. Brighten, ND, recommends these supplements to her preconception clients. For more information: https://drbrighten.com/9-ways-boost-progesterone-fertility/

Vitex

- Helps naturally raise progesterone levels. Take 2-3 ml of a tincture 2-3 times daily during the second half of your cycle or take 2-4 caps/daily during the luteal phase (days 15-28) of your cycle.
- Brand: Vitex 750 by Vital Nutrients

Rhodiola rosea

- Helps balance cortisol output, which indirectly supports healthy progesterone production. Take 2-4 ml of a tincture twice daily or supplement at 100 mg twice daily, with the second dose before 3 pm.
- Brand: Pure Encapsulations Rhodiola Rosea 100 mg

Vitamin C

- May help increase and intensify the effects of progesterone. 1,000 mg/day of vitamin C in supplement form or consume foods rich in vitamin C: strawberries, mango, papaya, watermelon, tomatoes, broccoli, cauliflower, cabbage, and spinach.
- Brand: Buffered Vitamin C 1000 mg by Integrative Therapeutics

Green Tea

- Helps with estrogen metabolism which is critical when dealing with estrogen dominance (PCOS, endometriosis, ovulatory issues). Consider swapping your coffee with a few cups of green tea.

B6

- Possesses “progesterone-like effects” and has been shown to reduce estrogen while increasing progesterone levels. Take 50 mg once daily or as part of a B-complex. Otherwise, you can choose to consume foods rich in B6 such as organ meat, fish, poultry, egg yolk, walnuts, banana, avocado, potatoes.
- Brand: P-5-P by Designs for Health

8. Maca (optional)

- To support your body’s own production of hormones and correct any underlying imbalances. This may be especially beneficial for those dealing with PCOS or irregular cycles.
- Brand: Femmenessence MacaHarmony® from Natural Health International
6. Exercise

Do what makes you happy! Every little bit counts, so don’t stress about “not doing enough.” Daily walks are fantastic, a few days of strength training is great, but the main takeaway with exercise and fertility is that you’re doing something you enjoy that has you moving your body a little every day. Depending on what you’re doing, this could be 15 minutes to 1 hour a day most days of the week.

If you’re currently going through an IVF cycle, you may need to modify your current exercise routine, so talk to your provider about your options.

If you’re a fitness fanatic, know that more doesn’t equal better. Exercise an amount that will provide you with benefits, without compromising your health.

7. Eliminating environmental toxins

Please approach this topic with caution. Don’t let this list stress you out. Instead, take it one step at a time. It took me a few years to make these changes, so don’t think it will just happen overnight. Start with one change, master it, then move on to the next when you’re ready:

- Avoid plastic water bottles. Choose glass or stainless steel.
- Purchase organic, when you can. Check out the Environmental Working Group’s list of Dirty Dozen and Clean 15 if you can’t afford to purchase all organic produce.
- Switch from plastic to glass for your storage containers and avoid microwaving in plastic.
- Switch to nontoxic household cleaners and beauty products.
- Consider filtering your water. A whole house filter may not be practical for your budget or living situation. I personally use a reverse osmosis system from Culligan for our drinking water and a filter from Aquasana for our shower. If you’re filtering your water, make sure to add trace minerals back into the water since they are removed during the filtration process. I use Concentrace Trace Mineral Drops.
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ELIMINATING ENVIRONMENTAL TOXINS CONT...

Your skin is the most absorptive organ on your body, so what you put ON your body affects you just as much as what you put in it. For fertility, the biggest threat is xenoestrogens (estrogen coming from outside sources). Four major personal care ingredients you should avoid:

- parabens
- sodium lauryl (or laureth) sulfates
- DEA (diethanolamine)
- propylene glycol

However, you may also want to avoid the following:

- artificial colors and fragrances
- benzene
- BPA
- MEA
- TEA
- Dimethicone
- EDTA
- formaldehyde
- gluten
- GMOs
- hydrogenated oils
- mineral oil
- petrolatum
- plastics/phthalates
- PEGs
- PVCs
- silicates
- silicones
- wheat

Plug your favorite beauty products into the search engine at Skin Deep to see how they rank!

Recommended brands:
OraWellness for dental health, Fat Face for deodorant and body lotion, Annmarie Gianni for organic face care, Beautycounter for makeup, Seventh Generation and Mrs. Meyers for cleaning products (or make your own with vinegar, filtered water, and essential oils like lemon and citrus).

Should you detox before conceiving? Check out this informative article for more information. https://avivaromn.com/detox-before-getting-pregnant/

8. Building your community and resource toolbox

In addition to the amazing women in the HMHB Facebook group, here are a few resources you may also want to explore to cultivate emotional support and community:

- Support groups held by your medical provider’s office
- Acupuncturists [https://www.reproductivewellness.com], massage therapists, and chiropractors trained in preconception/prenatal health
- Local lactation groups, babywearing classes, prenatal yoga, prenatal nutrition classes (Feel free to attend these groups/classes even if you’re not currently pregnant. Or, you can simply seek out these resources ahead of time so you know about them when you do become pregnant)
- Resolve, a national organization offering peer-led infertility support groups
- Infertility Resources, a comprehensive website with resources to support your fertility

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RESOURCES CONT...

- **Fertility EFT** is an effective tool to reduce stress, change your mindset, and reconnect with your natural positivity and resilience
  - Explore potential emotional blocks for fertility. It’s a great idea to journal your thoughts and/or talk to your partner/therapist in order to clear these barriers before conceiving:
    - Experiences from the past about your own parenting
    - Past births or miscarriages
    - Relationship with your mother
    - Fears and worries about pregnancy and childbirth
    - Concerns about how a baby may change aspects of your life (body, finances, career, relationship, social life)

- [Yes, You Can Get Pregnant](http://mamas.whole30.com) has a free monthly webinar series and lots of great info

9. Male Preconception Health

When it comes to preconception health, most of the information is targeted towards women’s health; however, your partner’s health is also very important. “Male factor” infertility is more prevalent than you may think, accounting for 40-50% of infertility. This is why it’s important for both you and your partner to get tested, if you’re having trouble conceiving.

Spermatogenesis (the life cycle of creating a new genetically different sperm) takes about 90-100 days, so know that it may take at least this long to see changes after implementing healthy habits. Start as early as you can to give yourself the best chances of conceiving.

Common causes for male factor infertility include things like genetic issues, low sperm count, poor sperm motility (how well the sperm swim forward), poor sperm morphology (the shape of the sperm), varicocele (varicose veins in the scrotum), hormonal issues, certain medications, trauma to the reproductive area, a poor quality diet, smoking, excessive alcohol consumption, lack of sleep, being overweight/obese, over or under-exercising, and STDs (which can often be asymptomatic).

**Lifestyle factors:**

1. It's important to be mindful of environmental factors, such as pesticides, exogenous estrogens from cleaning and personal care products, and heavy metals, as these may impact spermatogenesis.
2. Be mindful of heat exposure including hot baths, hot tubs, and where you’re placing your laptop and cell phone.
3. Understand the impact of stress and work on lowering your levels (see strategies above).
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**Lifestyle factors cont...**

4. Consider boxers over briefs and wear loose-fitting clothing.
5. Exercise moderately.
6. Consume a diet rich in fruits, vegetables, high quality protein, and healthy fats.
7. Avoid/limit excess sugar, cigarette smoking, and alcohol consumption.
8. Ensure adequate intake of essential fatty acids and limit/avoid hydrogenated oils as these have a negative impact on sperm cell function.
9. Consider acupuncture.*

*Recent studies have shown that acupuncture can effectively:
- Increase sperm production
- Increase the percentage of healthy sperm
- Improve motility
- Increase the rate of pregnancy when used in conjunction with assisted reproductive technology studies.

**ESSENTIAL NUTRIENTS FOR HEALTHY SPERM**

1. **Vitamin C**
   - Function: Inhibits DNA damage in sperm
   - Food sources: Bell peppers, broccoli, Brussels sprouts, leafy greens, oranges, strawberries

2. **Zinc**
   - Function: Required for sperm production
   - Food sources: Beef, cashews, lamb, oysters, pumpkin seeds, sesame seeds

3. **Folate (B9)**
   - Function: Works with zinc to create sperm
   - Food sources: Asparagus, broccoli, beets, cauliflower, leafy greens, liver
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**ESSENTIAL NUTRIENTS FOR HEALTHY SPERM CONT...**

4. Selenium  
- Function: Required to make the midsection of sperm where its energy is generated. It also helps manufacture thyroid hormones.  
- Food sources: Brazil nuts, salmon, sardines, shrimp, tuna

5. Vitamin E  
- Function: Inhibits DNA damage to the sperm  
- Food sources: Almonds, avocado, spinach, swiss chard, sunflower seeds

6. Vitamin A (preformed vitamin A)  
- Function: Conditions the lining of the cells that become sperm  
- Food sources: Pastured-raised egg yolks and animal meat, cod liver oil, grass-fed butter and ghee, organic full-fat cheese and milk

7. Other B vitamins (B6, B12)  
- Function: Helps decrease oxidative stress on the body and inhibits DNA damage in sperm  
- Food sources: Beef, chicken, eggs, liver, salmon, tuna, turkey

8. Essential fatty acids (EPA/DHA)  
- Function: Necessary for reproduction and strengthens sperm during fertilization  
- Food sources: Anchovies, mackerel (wild-caught Atlantic), salmon (wild-caught Alaskan), sardines

*List adapted from Nina White of Fertile Roots Nutrition

**SUPPLEMENTS (THE BASICS FOR GENERAL HEALTH):**

1. Multivitamin with folate  
- Helps ensure nutrient sufficiency.  
- Brand: Innate Response Men’s Multivitamin or Ortho Molecular’s Mitocore
These recommendations are for informational purposes only, and do not constitute medical advice. The information is not intended to be a substitute for professional medical advice, diagnosis, or treatment. Always seek the advice of a physician or qualified healthcare provider with any questions you may have regarding your health or pregnancy.

SUPPLEMENTS CONT...

2. Fish Oil
- Helps improve blood flow to the testicles and has been associated with improved sperm quality.
- Brand: Nordic Naturals

3. Vitamin D3/K2
- Vitamin D status is linked with male reproductive success. Vitamin D receptors are expressed on the testis and male reproductive tract. Vitamin D deficiency has been found to result in low sperm count, impaired sperm motility, and decreased pregnancy rates. Vitamin K2 supports healthy testosterone levels and sperm production.
- Brand: Ortho Molecular or Thorne Vitamin D3/K2 drops

4. Zinc
- Supports healthy testosterone levels, sperm motility and production
- Brand: Pure Encapsulations

5. Magnesium
- Supports healthy sperm and seminal fluid production. Magnesium also helps regulate blood flow to the reproductive organs.
- Brand: Pure Encapsulations

Supplements (advanced options, work with your provider)

These supplements may enhance blood flow to the testicles, improve sperm count, motility and morphology, and inhibit DNA damage:

- L-arginine
- L-carnitine
- Vitamin C
- Vitamin E
- Selenium
- Maca
- Pycnogenol
- CoQ10

(Brand: Revolution Macalibrium from Natural Health International)

MALE FERTILITY RESOURCES

- Find a male fertility specialist: [http://www.dontcockyourballs.com/](http://www.dontcockyourballs.com/)
- [https://www.reproductivewellness.com/improving-male-fertility/](https://www.reproductivewellness.com/improving-male-fertility/)