

## 10 WAYS TO IMPROVE YOUR CHANCES OF CONCEIVING

If you and your partner take an honest look at your lifestyle and are prepared to make some positive changes, you can dramatically increase your chances of conceiving.

**Here are 10 steps The Zhai Clinic recommends boosting your fertility:**

- 1. Watch what you eat every day.** To maximise your chances of getting pregnant, it's important to eat a healthy, balanced diet.
- 2. Watch your weight.** If you are overweight or very underweight, you are less likely to be able to conceive easily. If you or your partner are obese, consult your doctor for advice on the best and safest way to lose weight gradually.
- 3. Be active.** Regular, moderate exercise of around 30 minutes a day will help to improve your fitness and keep you at a good weight. It will also boost your endorphin levels, the body's own 'happy hormones'.
- 4. Drink wisely.** Women who are trying to conceive are advised to avoid alcohol completely. Men should drink no more than two or three small glasses of good-quality wine per week.
- 5. Don't smoke.** Smoking has been associated with infertility and early menopause in women, as well as sperm problems in men. It also reduces the success of fertility treatments.
- 6. Keep cool.** For optimum sperm production, the testicles should be a couple of degrees cooler than the rest of the body. Men should avoid tight underwear and jeans, cycling, and excessively hot baths and saunas. Showering the testicles with cool water for a few seconds each day will also help.
- 7. Take care at work.** Occupations that involve sitting for long periods or exposure to environmental chemicals may affect general health in women and may additionally affect sperm quality in men.
- 8. Manage stress.** We all have different stress thresholds and there is now growing evidence that being stressed can affect your chances of conceiving. The body interprets physiological stressors, such as lack of sleep and intensive athletic training, in the same way as psychological stress caused by excessive anxiety, bereavement, or divorce. Stress can affect your mental health and disturb your normal bodily functions. Therefore, it is important to try to identify and reduce anything that causes you stress.
- 9. Take folic acid daily vitamins.** All women trying to conceive should take 400mcg of folic acid a day to help prevent birth defects such as spina bifida.
- 10. Check drugs.** Certain prescription drugs can reduce the chances of conception, so make your doctor aware that you are trying for a baby.

**Patients of The Zhai Clinic receive tailored advice on specific ways to boost their fertility based on their diagnosis.**