



# Diet & fertility

While many factors that affect fertility are beyond your control, lifestyle habits are something you can change for the better when trying to conceive.

Eating a nutritious diet and maintaining a healthy weight put your body in the right condition for reproduction. Choosing a quality diet is an essential part of the process.

## WHAT TO EAT

There are still gaps in our understanding of the best diet to promote fertility. However, we do know a healthy diet is beneficial in all stages of life. Here are some general guidelines that have been shown to support fertility:

- **Choose healthy fats.** These include monounsaturated and omega 3 fats. Olive oil, avocados, fatty fish, nuts, and seeds are good sources of these fats.
- **Up your plant intake.** Fruits, vegetables, whole grains, beans, legumes, and nuts and seeds should feature heavily in your diet.
- **Women should consume foods high in iron.** Plant sources of iron include beans, lentils, leafy greens, fortified cereals, and whole grains. For better absorption, include vitamin C-rich foods such as citrus, berries, and peppers.
- **Women should take a daily prenatal multivitamin.** It should include 400 micrograms of folic acid.



## WHAT TO AVOID

The eating pattern considered beneficial for fertility also includes foods to limit when trying to conceive.

- **Trans fats.** These less healthy fats are found in some processed foods. Choosing a whole food diet will naturally eliminate many unhealthy trans fats.
- **Less animal protein.** Small quantities of beef, chicken, pork, and fish are OK, but most people benefit from cutting back, especially red meat.
- **Fad diets.** Avoid following fads as these diets are often imbalanced or can lead to rapid, unhealthy weight loss which may interfere with fertility.
- **Junk food.** Processed foods high in sugar, salt, and fat don't support reproductive health.

