



Infertility: *When to see a doctor*

It is not uncommon for some couples to have trouble conceiving. If a couple has been trying for one year without success, they are said to be dealing with infertility.

While infertility may be common, it is not hopeless. Many effective treatments are available. Knowing when to talk to your doctor about fertility can help you get closer to your goal of getting pregnant.

WHAT CAUSES INFERTILITY?

Infertility is not just a woman's issue. It can affect one or both partners.

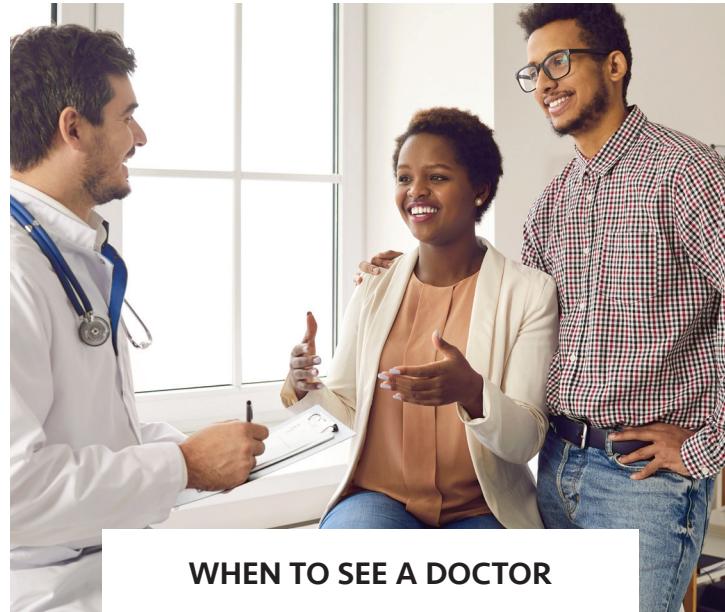
Men require healthy sperm to be fertile. Anything that impacts the number, shape, and movement of sperm may cause infertility. These may include:

- Unhealthy habits
- Trauma to the testes
- Certain medications or supplements
- Cancer treatment
- Medical conditions



Women need functioning ovaries, fallopian tubes, and a uterus to get pregnant. A condition that affects any one of these organs can cause infertility issues. These may include:

- Polycystic ovary syndrome (PCOS)
- Diminished ovarian reserve
- Blocked fallopian tubes
- Menopause
- Abnormal uterine shape



WHEN TO SEE A DOCTOR

Every couple should talk to their doctor to let them know they are trying to get pregnant. Your doctor may have specific recommendations and screenings that would be of benefit.

Some couples may be at a higher risk of infertility. If you have any of the following risk factors, you should talk to your doctor right away when trying to conceive:

- Irregular or no menstrual periods
- Painful periods
- Endometriosis
- Pelvic inflammatory disease
- History of miscarriage
- Any suspected male factors, such as cancer treatment, history of testis trauma, etc.

Women over the age of 30 may experience age-related declines in fertility. Once a woman is over 35, infertility becomes more common. While this doesn't mean someone at that age will not be able to conceive, it does mean you should talk to your doctor sooner if you do not become pregnant.

Any couple who has been trying to conceive for one year without success should talk to their doctor. Couples over the age of 35 should talk to their doctor after six months of trying.

Your doctor may refer you to a reproductive endocrinologist who specializes in infertility. Never hesitate to talk with your doctor if you have any questions or concerns about yourself or your partner's fertility.