

## **Recommendations for Promoting Male Fertility**

*By applying the lifestyle principles of Chinese medicine you can optimize your fertility.*

**SLEEP AND REST** – sufficient and regular sleep is important for overall health.

**STRESS** can negatively impact male fertility. It is important to incorporate ways of distressing: simplify as much as possible, leave out unnecessary stressors, and include relaxing activities.

**EXERCISE** – is a useful strategy for de-stressing, moving the energy (Qi) and disengaging the mind. Massage or Thai bodywork can do the same. Meditation is an effective means to prevent Qi stagnation (over stressed). Qi Gong and Tai Qi are moving meditations that are especially effective.

**ACUPUNCTURE** – Acupuncture can strengthen and balance your Qi and release unnecessary tension. The result is better health and fertility.

**CHINESE HERBAL MEDICINE** – an herbal formula can be customized specifically for your needs to optimize your fertility.

**WEIGHT** – Every pound overweight decreases fertility.

### **DIET**

Keep hydrated by drinking sufficient water (without sugar, caffeine, carbonation or salt, however, lemon, lime or electrolytes are good to add)

Eat organic food – organic meat, fruits, vegetables, oils, dairy and grains which are available at natural grocery stores as well as at most regular supermarkets.

Be sure to eat vegetables, especially green leafy vegetables which are alkaline.

Meat strengthens the Qi and Blood – eat regularly in small quantities because it is acidic and in large quantities can create Qi stagnation.

Legumes, nuts, and seeds contain phytosterols that promote testosterone production.

### **SUPPLEMENTS**

A good quality food source multi-vitamin is recommended. It may need to be supplemented with some (not all) of the following.

Vitamin A: 5000 IU

Beta-carotene: 20,000 IU

Thiamine (B1): 50 mg

Riboflavin (B2): 30 – 50 mg

Niacin (B3): 50 – 100 mg

Pantothenic acid (B5): 100 – 250 mg

Pyridoxine (B6): 100 mg

Cobalamin (B12): 125 – 1000 mcg (replication of cells)

Folic acid: 400 – 800 mcg

Biotin: 100 mcg

Vitamin C: 1000 mg (protects sperm DNA; anti-oxidant)

Vitamin D: 400 IU

Vitamin E: 400 – 800 IU

Selenium: 200 mcg

Zinc: 60 mg/day (for sperm production and testosterone metabolism)

L-arginine: 2-4 g/day (promotes cellular replication)

L-carnitine: 1000-1200 mg/day (assists sperm motility)

Bee pollen: (improves sperm production)

Essential fatty acids found in fish, fish oil, krill oil, and flax seed oil contribute to the health of the sperm (morphology/form) and seminal fluid.

#### TEMPERATURE

The testicles are several degrees lower than body temperature which is important for sperm production. A rise in temperature of just 2 degrees for 24 hours reduces sperm production. Therefore it is important to reduce heat to the testicles – the following can raise the temperature and should be avoided:

- Excessively intensive exercise – raises temperature of scrotum and affects hormonal balance. Long distance bike riding is especially damaging.
- Tight underwear.
- Putting laptop on lap
- Hot baths, hot tubs and saunas.

#### TOXINS - CHEMICALS

Sperm is extremely sensitive: chemicals in the environment and in food can affect fertility. This is especially true for men with low sperm counts and poor morphology (form).

Avoid the following:

- Industrial chemicals and fumes (paint fumes, gasoline, ammonia, nail polish removal, pesticides, printing inks, adhesives, dry cleaning liquid).
- Heavy metals: mercury in fish (especially tuna and shark) and leaking dental amalgams, lead, cadmium (used in the manufacturing process of plastics, ceramics, metals, rubber, pesticides and some refined foods and cigarettes).
- Plastics – phthalates found in plastics (and other ? chemicals) are implicated in the reduction of fertility. Use plastic wraps and other plastic products minimally.
- Pesticides and hormones (estrogens and anti-androgens) found in non-organic foods and all soy products (contain a high quantity of estrogens). Also gossypol in cottonseed oil is implicated in male infertility.

#### OUR DAILY DRUGS

Caffeine – reduce coffee and other caffeinated beverage intake or switch to tea, which has less caffeine than coffee, especially if you are having trouble conceiving.

Alcohol – avoid excessive intake of alcohol – those with damp heat and phlegm conditions should avoid alcohol altogether (alcohol = damp heat in liquid form).

Cigarette smoking – smoker's sperm counts are nearly 20% lower than non-smoker's sperm counts. When smokers stop smoking sperm counts can rise between 50 and 800%!

#### Recreational drugs

Marijuana – the THC in marijuana negatively affects sperm production and motility, interferes with fertilization and causes sperm to go into hyperactive stage too soon (as does Viagra).

Heavy marijuana use (14 smokes/week) has been shown to significantly damage male fertility.

Cocaine is also implicated in infertility.

Medical drugs – can impair fertility. In particular, anabolic steroids and drugs for ulcers and ulcerative colitis.