



## the fertility diet

A recent study published in the journal *Obstetrics and Gynecology* indicates that the majority of infertility cases caused by ovulation problems may be prevented by adopting simple dietary and lifestyle practices.

Researchers from the Harvard School of Public Health followed more than 17,000 women, who had no history of infertility, trying to become pregnant. The study ran for eight years. The women's diets were rated using a scorecard based on factors previously confirmed to be linked with infertility.

Women who most closely followed the pregnancy-promoting fertility diet were 66 percent less likely to face infertility than women who least followed it. In fact, the greater the number of health habits the women adopted, the greater their chance of becoming pregnant. There was a sixfold difference in the risk of infertility between women following none of the dietary recommendations and those following five or more. If you're a woman who has had difficulty conceiving, why not try these research based recommendations?

### lifestyle tips to boost fertility

- ▶ Prefer monounsaturated fats, such as olive oil, canola oil, or avocado oil.
- ▶ Get adequate iron from plant foods and supplements.

- ▶ Use less trans fats (preferably none), meaning you should avoid fast foods and processed snacks.
- ▶ Choose your proteins from vegetable sources rather than animal sources.
- ▶ Eat more low GI (glycemic index) foods, such as whole-grain pastas and breads, and avoid white bread.
- ▶ Use less sugar and eat less sweet foods, such as soft drinks, cakes, cookies, and confectionery.
- ▶ Use regular milk and dairy products.
- ▶ Take multivitamins.
- ▶ If you are overweight or obese, reduce your body weight.
- ▶ Engage in regular physical activity, such as adding a 30-minute walk, and avoid being a couch potato!

### good news for the family

The fertility diet isn't just for women who want to become pregnant. Together with weight loss and exercise, these health practices will benefit other family members by reducing their risk of heart disease, Type 2 diabetes, and some cancers.

Nutritionist Sue Radd is the award-winning author of *The Breakfast Book* and coauthor of *Eat To Live*, internationally acclaimed for showing how savvy eating can combat cancer and heart disease and improve well-being. See the latest at <http://www.sueradd.com>.