

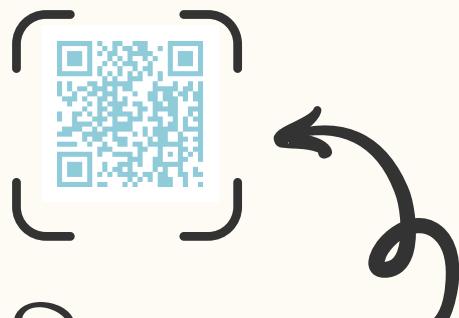
Pregnancy Planning

Fertility Check

Stay proactive with your reproductive health through a fertility health check. Early identification of potential issues can make all the difference. This may involve a chat with your GP and an pre-pregnancy blood tests that may be necessary.



For more information check out:



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Nutrition

- Incorporate fresh fruits and vegetables into your daily meals.
- Aim for high-quality protein sources like lean meats, eggs, or plant-based options such as beans and lentils.
- Embrace complex carbohydrates, such as whole grains, for sustained energy.
- Steer clear of excessive additives like artificial colors, flavors, and preservatives.
- Opt for healthy fats like olive oil.
- Being aware of the foods to avoid during pregnancy that may increase risk of complications.

Cervical Screening

Don't let your cervical screening test slip through the cracks. It's better to get one a tad early than find out about a potential issue in the midst of pregnancy. Keep that proactive spirit alive!



Emotional Health

While taking care of your physical health during pregnancy is crucial, don't forget to give your mental wellbeing some love too! It's just as important. Have a chat to your health care provider sooner rather than later.

Caffeine Consciousness

Keep your caffeine intake in check, aiming for less than 200mg per day. That's roughly one or two coffees. Caffeine is also in tea, cola and energy drinks.



Weight

Balance is key. Calculate your BMI (weight in kilograms divided by height in meters squared), aiming for 20 to 26. Obesity raises risks, including infertility, while being underweight can lead to irregular cycles. Consult a dietitian for personalised advice and avoid extreme weight changes.



Drugs and Fertility

Certain medications can play a wild card in the realm of fertility, affecting both men and women. These include recreational drugs, blood pressure medications, mood-altering agents, chemotherapy drugs, and hormones like anabolic steroids. The consequences can range from direct harm to reproductive organs to hormonal imbalances, erectile dysfunction, and impacts on libido.

It is also a good idea for women to discuss the safety of their medications with their prescribing doctors, especially if they're planning a pregnancy.

Fitness

Being fit before pregnancy is a plus, but men, this applies to you too! Your fitness at conception can impact your child's future health. Start with brisk walking, gradually increasing your exercise duration and frequency. High-impact or intense exercise should be limited to no more than four hours a week. Avoid activities that involve risks of collision, falling, significant changes in atmospheric pressure and heavy lifting. Pelvic floor exercises are recommended before, during and after pregnancy.



Rubella And Varicella Immunity

Planning for a little one and wondering how you can protect you both against certain infectious diseases, in particular rubella and varicella which can lead to foetal illness? A quick blood test can help solve this mystery. And if you're not immune! A simple vaccination is all it takes prior to pregnancy or being more aware and knowing the plan if you are ever exposed to infectious diseases.

Smoking and Alcohol

Smoking isn't a friend to fertility, affecting both genders and even DNA in sperm and eggs. Quitting can reduce miscarriage risk and improve your long-term health. For alcohol, if you're pregnant or planning to be, it's a no-go for pregnancy.



Sexually Transmitted Diseases

Chlamydia: This common STI, caused by chlamydia trachomatis, can cause issues in both women and men. Untreated infections in women can lead to blocked fallopian tubes and scar tissue, making it tough for eggs to meet sperm, potentially resulting in infertility or ectopic pregnancies. In men, untreated infections can mess with sperm maturation, also posing risks to fertility. Other culprits in the STI realm include Gonorrhoea, Syphilis, HPV, Herpes, HIV, and Hepatitis B.

Age and Fertility

Age plays a role in fertility for both genders. Women have a reproductive timeline, with fertility declining significantly after 37 to 38 years. Miscarriage rates increase with age. Consider all your options including chatting to your doctor about egg freezing.

Reproductive Carrier Screening

Consider reproductive carrier screening before you dive into parenthood. Following RANZCOG guidelines, this screening helps identify genetic factors that might affect fertility or your future child's health. If you're found to be a carrier for a genetic condition, there are options to explore. Medicare are now providing funding for testing whether you carrier genes for Cystic Fibrosis, Spinal Muscular Atrophy and Fragile X Syndrome.

Folate and Iodine

The significance of adequate folate intake in the diet of expecting mothers cannot be overstated, especially in the months preceding childbirth and during the initial trimester. Folate plays a vital role in minimizing the likelihood of neural tube defects, such as spina bifida, in your baby.

An iodine supplementation of 150mcg per day is also recommended is also imprtant for your baby's brain development.

Consult your GP for more information

