

 FERTILITY

Who's the daddy?

Increase your baby-making chances with these top tips designed to get everything moving swimmingly

According to a study by the World Health Organization, infertility success or failure is equally down to men as it is women. Healthy sperm includes count, morphology (structure) and motility (movement), and some of that is within your control. "Some men cut out all the things that brings them any kind of joy and that's no way to make a baby," says fertility expert Emma Cannon. "It's about taking the middle road." Here are her five tips for giving the boys a boost...

Eat well

Fertility can be negatively affected by too much protein, fat, carbohydrate and dairy. However, just eating certain foods high in antioxidants can prevent oxidative stress and improve the health of your sperm. "It's not about 'superfoods'," says Cannon. "It's more about eating a balanced diet, especially things such as pumpkin seeds and walnuts. Water can also improve your sperm count, while asparagus can do wonders."

Decrease the heat

"The reason the testicles hang outside the body is to keep them cool, and sperm does better when it's cool," says Cannon. "Chefs, traditionally, have been susceptible to fertility problems because their testicles are quite near heat sources. Other negative influences can include sitting with laptops on our laps, wearing tight briefs instead of boxers, or regularly using heated car seats."


Hold the hedonism

Heavy alcohol consumption, cigarettes and drug use can upset your fertility. "For guys in their thirties and forties, it can destroy all their serotonin, severely reducing sexual function," says Cannon.

Beware of chemicals

Pollution can negatively affect morphology and motility. "Environmental pollution can impact the shape of the sperm's head and tail," says Cannon. Plastics, too, are a problem. "Things like Cellophane are endocrine disrupters. We absorb all these things into our cells and bloodstream. Heating Cellophane while cooking, for example, can leak xenoestrogen, disrupting the hormones."

Have sex. A lot

There is a myth that saving your sperm for ovulation time will benefit your chances. But stagnant sperm can be problematic. "People get into a cycle where they're just having sex to make a baby. It's much better to have sex regularly so the guy is continually renewing fresher sperm." To sum up: go for your life! **Alex Godfrey** 

Fertile by Emma Cannon (Vermillion, £16.59) is out now.