

On Your Own

There are certainly some things that you as a couple can do on your own to enhance and improve your chances of conceiving. We would strongly encourage you to initiate each of these steps as soon as possible.

1. **STOP SMOKING!** There is no question that cigarette smoking has a very negative effect on a couple's chances of getting pregnant. It has been estimated that, if both partners smoke, their chances of getting pregnant are reduced by as much as 50%, regardless of whether they are trying on their own or undergoing the most sophisticated of techniques. If one partner smokes, this number may still be as high as 33%. Almost everyone says they will quit smoking when they get pregnant - just do it now, assume you will be successful in your effort to conceive and you will be way ahead of the game.
2. **Limit caffeine.** You do not need eliminate caffeine all together, but there is evidence that consuming more than the equivalent of two cups of coffee a day begins to decrease your chances of conception. Just limit yourself to this level. There is caffeine in coffee, tea, iced tea, sodas, and chocolate - all of these sources count towards your daily total.
3. **Limit alcohol.** Once again, you probably don't need to become a "tea-totaller" while trying to get pregnant. Just use your common sense. There is no question that excessive alcohol intake can have very detrimental effects on, for example, sperm production, but a beer or two on the weekends doesn't hurt a thing.
4. **Watch your weight.** There is no question that obesity makes it more difficult to conceive and that it increases the risks of pregnancy when one does conceive. At your initial visit we will help you determine your Body Mass Index (BMI.) Keeping your BMI at 30 or below will improve your chances.
5. **No illegal drugs.** Marijuana use is very hard on sperm production. Anabolic steroids can destroy sperm production forever. Just don't do it.
6. **Take vitamins.** It is a good idea for everyone to take vitamins - not megadoses of vitamins that result in excessive levels of some vitamins - just a good once a day vitamin supplement. This applies to men too. For women, as soon as you begin to attempt to conceive, it is a good ideal to start taking a prenatal vitamin so that you are certain to have plenty of foliate around when you do conceive.
7. **Exercise.** Lots of people stop exercising when they begin to try to get pregnant because they think it will improve their chances. Unless you are exercising to extremes - training for marathons, biking hundreds of miles a week, or doing aerobics seven days a week - this just isn't true. Moderate exercise does no harm and can be a very good way to help one deal with the stress associated with difficulty in getting pregnant.
8. **De-stress.** Excessive levels of stress can disrupt menstrual cycles or even result in them stopping altogether. Stress also decreases your ability to cope emotionally with the frustration of infertility. If you have a lot of other sources of stress in your life, try to deal with some of those first and then you'll be better able to concentrate on your efforts to conceive,
9. **Take one baby aspirin every day (80-81mg.)** There is some evidence that taking one baby aspirin every day improves conception rates.

NORTH 11725 Illinois Street, Suite 515 • Carmel, IN 46032 • Phone 317.814.4110 • Toll Free 888.674.0101 • Fax 317.814.4114

WEST 1111 Ronald Reagan Parkway, Suite • C-1100 Avon, IN 46123 • Phone 317.217.2525 • Toll Free 888.674.0101 • Fax 317.217.2535

SOUTH 8051 S. Emerson Avenue, Suite 410 • Indianapolis, IN 46237 • Phone 317.888.1242 • Toll Free 800.944.4743 • Fax 317.888.1557