



Ms Alice Gormack

Dietician

Fertility Associates

Saturday, June 10, 2017

11:30 - 11:45 Do Lifestyle and Diet Matter re Fertility?



FERTILITY
associates

| a better understanding

TE RAUHANGA O TE WHARETANGATA

Lifestyle and diet

What really matters for fertility?



Alice Gormack
NZ Registered Dietitian

Leaders in Fertility

Lifestyle factors and fertility

- Body weight
- Dietary intake, vitamin and mineral supplements
- Alcohol and caffeine
- Smoking, substance abuse and pollutants (not covered)



Body weight

- Overweight/obese:
 - ↓ fertility & fecundability
 - Negative effect on fertility treatment
 - ↑ gestational risk
 - Metabolic impact on offspring
- Underweight:
 - ↓ fertility
 - ↑ gestational risk





Miracle foods for a baby?

Baby carrots

Warm food only

Garlic

Peppers

Avocado

Wheatgrass

Tomatoes

Apples

Citrus fruit

Sprouts

Oysters

Cashew nuts

Asparagus

Pineapple

Kale

Cooked food only

Pumpkin seeds

Walnuts

Chia seeds

Banana

...Sadly not!



Nutritional problems in NZ

- **Too much:**

- Saturated fat
- Sugar (eg. drinks)
- Sodium / salt
- Alcohol

- **Not enough:**

- Dietary fibre
- Calcium
- Iron (women)
- Omega-3 fatty acids
- Fruit and veges



Beneficial dietary patterns?

- **Mediterranean diet** may be beneficial for fertility (compared with Western-diet)
- Adherence to dietary guidelines may help the chance on ongoing pregnancy (Dutch study in IVF couples)
-  non-haem iron and  higher fat dairy products may  risk of ovulatory infertility
- Dietary micronutrients
 - **Little conclusive evidence for fertility**

Alcohol

Heavy intake (>8/wk)

- ↓ male and female fertility

Moderate intake (7-8/wk)

- ↓ conception / no clear effect

Alcohol and IVF

- Negative effect on IVF treatment success



Caffeine

- Most studies show a negative effect on fertility
 - ↑ time to conceive
 - ↑ risk of spontaneous abortion
- However, other studies show no effect
- Appears to have negative effect on IVF treatment success
 - ↑ risk of miscarriage
 - ↓ chance of live birth



Nutritional supplements

- Improve food intake, don't rely on pills!
- Avoid foreign / homemade supplements
- Females:
 - 800mcg folic acid + 150mcg iodine
 - **OR** combined prenatal supplement with adequate folic acid and iodine
 - Some women need more folic acid (5000mcg/day),
 - previous NTD / family history of NTD, obese, T1DM, epilepsy meds
 - Iron supplement/vitamin D if indicated





- Males:
 - There are **no recommended nutritional supplements** for males trying for a baby
 - However, antioxidant supplements may be useful for men with sperm problems:
 - Vitamin C, vitamin E, zinc and selenium may improve sperm
 - ‘Menevit’ may improve sperm (small IVF study)



Lifestyle choices to optimise fertility:

- Eat a wide range of foods, with sensible portion sizes
 - Lean/vege protein, wholegrain carbs, unsaturated fat, f & v
- Limit processed foods
- Quit smoking, stop alcohol, lower caffeine
- Healthy hydration
- Work towards the healthy weight range
- Keep active





Search ID: ksmn1260
"Wait a minute, this prescription is for a dozen oysters and half an ounce of powdered rhino horn! "

Thank you.