

Measures to Improve Male Fertility

This section gives you information about simple measures that you can take to improve the quality of your semen and your fertility.

The effect of heat

The normal activity of the sperm producing tubules in the testes is affected by heat. Intermittent overheating of the testes leads to a reduction in sperm production and/or a decrease in sperm activity (motility). The testes are situated in the scrotum mainly because it is cooler there than inside the abdominal cavity. The testes have their own heat regulating mechanism so that in cold conditions, the scrotum contracts pulling the testes closer to the body, whereas in hot conditions, the testes hang much lower.

Overheating of the testes can be caused in various ways:

- Soaking in hot baths
- Working in a high environmental temperature
- Jacuzzis or saunas
- Wearing tight or support underwear
- In addition, illness associated with fever temporarily reduces fertility.

Remember that sperm take 70 days to develop from their cells of origin, thus any episode of testicular overheating could affect your fertility for over 2 months.

To improve your fertility, you should:

- Avoid hot baths, jacuzzis and saunas and change to having showers or lukewarm baths
- Wear non-support, non-insulating cotton boxer shorts
- Try taking zinc and vitamin E. There is evidence to suggest that in some cases the taking of zinc and vitamin E can improve sperm quality.

Other factors

All vices of modern living may effect fertility and should be either completely avoided or taken in moderation. These include:

- Smoking
- Alcohol
- Marijuana
- Certain drugs

Diet and Exercise

See section on [Measures to Improve Female Fertility](#) below

Measures to Improve Female Fertility

Unfortunately there are no specific measures to improve female fertility but, by improving your general health, you can prepare your body for treatment and hopefully a pregnancy.

Weight

To help you identify the acceptable weight for your height, please refer to the Body Mass Index chart. If you check your weight against your height, your body mass index should lie in the green shaded area.

Please note that it is in your best interests to achieve an acceptable body weight. **If you do not do so it may significantly reduce the chances of your treatment working.** Research has shown that ovaries

respond more effectively (ie produce eggs) when the women has a BMI between 20 and 30. Procedures such as ultrasound scans and egg collection are als performed more effectively.

Smoking

To help maximise your potential to achieve pregnancy **it is vital that you give up smoking**. Research has shown the following:

Male: Smoking is associated with a decreased sperm count, reduced sperm motility, reduced testosterone levels and an increase in the number of abnormal cells.

Female: Smoking is associated with a reduction in the number of eggs the ovary produces, poor implantation of embryos and low birth weight.

There are **many** other detrimental factors of smoking relating to fertility.

QUITLINE Tel:0800 002200 9am - 9pm

You can phone this number for a QUIT PACK leaflet and information on the best way to stop smoking.

Diet and Exercise

Eat a balanced diet including 5 portions of fruit/vegetables per day. Reduce alcohol intake to minimum (5 units per week) and avoid if possible. Reduce caffeine intake by avoiding coffee. Regular exercise helps to keep your weight within normal limits and reduces stress levels.

It is also recommended that women trying to get pregnant or who have just become pregnant should take Folic Acid tablets. You can get these from any chemist. You may obtain further information from the organisation 'Foresight' whose address is provided in the section on [Useful addresses](#).

Body Mass Index

Check your weight against your height. Your body mass index should be in the green area of the chart prior to commencement of treatment. For example, if you are 5'6" and you weigh 10st 10lbs, your body mass index is 24.

WEIGHT KG	HEIGHT IN CM																WEIGHT	
	141	144	147	150	153	156	159	162	165	168	171	174	177	181	183	186	ST	LB
40	20	19	19	18	17	16	16	15	15	14	14	13	13	12	12	12	6	4
42	21	20	19	19	18	17	17	16	15	15	14	14	13	13	13	12	6	8
44	22	21	20	20	19	18	17	17	16	16	15	15	14	14	13	13	6	13
46	23	22	21	20	20	19	18	18	17	16	16	15	15	14	14	13	7	4
48	24	23	22	21	21	20	19	18	18	17	16	16	15	15	14	14	7	8
50	25	24	23	22	21	21	20	19	18	18	17	17	16	15	15	14	7	13
52	26	25	24	23	22	21	21	20	19	18	18	17	17	16	16	15	8	3
54	27	26	25	24	23	22	21	21	20	19	18	18	17	17	16	16	8	7
56	28	27	26	25	24	23	22	21	21	20	19	18	18	17	17	16	8	12
58	29	28	27	26	25	24	23	22	21	21	20	19	19	18	17	17	9	2
60	30	29	28	27	26	25	24	23	22	21	21	20	19	19	18	17	9	7
62	31	30	29	28	26	25	25	24	23	22	21	20	20	19	19	18	9	11
64	32	31	30	28	27	26	25	24	24	23	22	21	20	20	19	18	10	1
66	33	32	31	29	28	27	26	25	24	23	23	22	21	20	20	19	10	6
68	34	33	31	30	29	28	27	26	25	24	23	22	22	21	20	20	10	10
70	35	34	32	31	30	29	28	27	26	25	24	23	22	22	21	20	11	0
72	36	35	33	32	31	30	28	27	26	26	25	24	23	22	21	21	11	5
74	37	36	34	33	32	30	29	28	27	26	25	24	24	23	22	21	11	9
76	38	37	35	34	32	31	30	29	28	27	26	25	24	23	23	22	12	0
78	39	38	36	35	33	32	31	30	29	28	27	26	25	24	23	23	12	4
80	40	39	37	36	34	33	32	30	29	28	27	26	26	25	24	23	12	8
82	41	40	38	36	35	34	32	31	30	29	28	27	26	25	24	24	12	3
84	42	41	39	37	36	35	33	32	31	30	29	28	27	26	25	24	13	3
86	43	41	40	38	37	35	34	33	32	30	29	28	27	27	26	25	13	8
88	44	42	41	39	38	36	35	34	32	31	30	29	28	27	26	25	13	12
90	45	43	42	40	38	37	36	34	33	32	31	30	29	28	27	26	14	3
92	46	44	43	41	39	38	36	35	34	33	31	30	29	28	27	27	14	7
94	47	45	44	42	40	39	37	36	35	33	32	31	30	29	28	27	14	11
96	48	46	44	43	41	39	38	37	35	33	34	32	31	30	29	28	15	2
98	49	47	45	44	42	40	39	37	36	35	34	32	31	30	29	28	15	6
100	50	48	46	44	43	41	40	38	37	35	34	33	32	31	30	29	15	11
102	51	49	47	45	44	42	40	39	37	36	35	34	33	31	30	29	16	1
104	52	50	48	46	44	43	41	40	38	37	36	34	33	32	31	30	16	5
106	53	51	49	47	45	44	42	40	39	38	36	35	34	33	32	31	16	10
110	55	53	51	49	47	45	44	42	40	39	38	36	35	34	33	32	17	5
112	56	54	52	50	48	46	44	43	41	40	38	37	36	35	33	32	17	9
114	57	55	53	51	49	47	45	43	42	40	39	38	36	35	34	33	18	0
116	58	56	54	52	50	48	46	44	43	41	40	38	37	36	35	34	18	4
118	59	57	55	52	50	48	47	45	43	42	40	39	38	36	35	34	18	8
120	60	58	56	53	51	49	47	46	44	43	41	40	38	37	36	35	18	13
122	61	59	56	54	52	50	48	46	45	43	42	40	39	38	36	35	19	3
124	62	60	57	55	53	51	49	47	46	44	42	41	40	38	37	36	19	8
126	63	61	58	56	54	52	50	48	46	45	43	42	40	39	38	36	19	12
128	64	62	59	57	55	53	51	49	47	45	44	42	41	40	38	37	20	2
130	65	63	60	58	56	53	51	50	48	46	44	43	41	40	39	38	20	7

HEIGHT IN FEET AND INCHES