

HEALTH

Yale OB/GYN Offers Helpful Tips to Prep for Pregnancy

NewsUSA



(NU) - Following a significant drop in babies born in the last year, some forecasters are now predicting a ‘mini baby boom’ in 2022. If you are now considering starting or growing your family, maximizing fertility and learning about your health is a critical place to begin. The below Q&A will help guide you as you embark on your path to pregnancy.

How long will it take to get pregnant? What’s normal, and what’s not?

First, some basic guidelines: it is possible that you may get pregnant the first time you try –but it’s unusual. Statistically, the chance of conceiving in any one month of trying-presuming regular intercourse (at least every other day around ovulation time) is about 15-20%. By the end of six months of trying, it’s 50%. And by the end of a year of trying, it’s 80%. So, don’t be too concerned if it doesn’t happen as quickly as you thought. However, if you are under the age of 35 and have been trying to conceive for one year, or if you are 35 or older and have been trying for six months without luck, contact a healthcare provider who may recommend testing to evaluate why you might not be getting pregnant.

What do I need to know before I try to get pregnant?

Remember to maintain good health habits BEFORE you begin trying to conceive to increase your chances of a healthy pregnancy outcome. Important lifestyle adjustments should include eliminating smoking and drugs, and limiting alcohol intake. Begin taking prenatal vitamins, such as vitafusion Prenatal gummy vitamins that provide sufficient folate and Omega-3 DHA to reduce the chances of a baby being born with a neural tube defect, such as spina bifida.

According to the March of Dimes, there is no safe time to drink alcohol during pregnancy. Alcohol can cause problems for your baby at any time during pregnancy, even before you know that you’re pregnant. Not only is drinking during pregnancy dangerous, specifically for a baby’s brain development, but studies have shown that significant alcohol consumption can also contribute to decreased fertility. So, even if getting pregnant is just an idea, and you are off birth control, be extremely mindful of alcohol intake.

Visit with your healthcare provider before trying to conceive to discuss alternatives for certain medications that are not recommended for pregnancy, such as medications for high blood pressure or seizures. And if you are diabetic, try to get your diabetes under control to minimize the chance of a baby being born with any birth defects that can be linked to diabetes.

How can I maximize my chances of conceiving?

You ovulate about 14 days before you get your period. So, if you

experience a 28-day cycle, you are probably ovulating around day 14-15 (counting the first day of your period as day one). If you have a 35-day cycle, you are likely ovulating around day 21. To maximize fertile days, an ovulation test kit will tell you when your LH surge occurs (LH, or the luteinizing hormone, triggers ovulation and marks the beginning of a fertile period), so you can make the most of your prime conception time. However, timing ovulation and rushing to have sex on demand can be stressful month after month. Stress and sex do not mix well and can lead to vaginal dryness and painful sex. Make sure to use a clinically tested, fertility-friendly lubricant like Pre-Seed, which mimics the body’s natural fertile fluids and helps keep sperm healthy and strong on its way to meet the egg.

Tips for pregnancy testing?

The two-week wait to take a pregnancy test after ovulation can feel like an eternity for those who want to know whether or not their recent efforts to make a baby were successful. Luckily, some at-home pregnancy tests use advanced technology that is sensitive enough to detect tiny amounts of hCG, or the pregnancy hormone, in urine. An extremely sensitive test is the First Response Early Result Pregnancy Test, which can give an accurate result up to six days before the day of a missed period. Combo packs are also convenient when trying to conceive, such as the First Response Comfort Check Pregnancy Test kit that comes with three Early Result tests and five pregnancy test strips for added reassurance.

Try to test for pregnancy first thing in the morning, as this is generally when hCG is most concentrated. However, you can test for pregnancy any time of the day. Another pro-tip when testing, if you aren’t sure whether or not you see a second line on the pregnancy test, or if the second line is faint, utilize an app such as EasyRead that can help you be certain of your result by scanning the analog test window on First Response tests. EasyRead will convert the lines into words on your phone: ‘Pregnant’ or ‘Not Pregnant’.

Other words of advice?

Remember to follow good rules of health before, during and after your pregnancy journey. When trying to conceive, try to be as close as you can to your ideal body weight for a healthy pregnancy. Make sure to hydrate, get enough rest, and attend all check-ins with your healthcare provider as your journey progresses. And remember, try to relax and let the baby-making process be fun. Good luck!

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