

Fertility: Conception and Contraception

A handbook for the Muslim Family

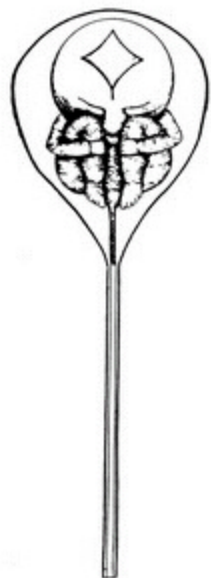


FIG. 479. Human Spermatozoon with Preformed Individual¹

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<http://www.ummah.net/islam/taqwapalace>

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Disclaimer:

- 1) All information in this book has been made available in order to help you take consciousness of all the factors that affect infertility, fertility, sexual life and health in general. It does not intend to replace a medical advice!
- 2) You should test for all the causes that may affect you and your health before you look for more drastic cures such as surgery or chemicals. Allaah has promised us that there is a cure for everything, except old age and death, so one can find it if s/he looks long enough and hard enough.
- 3) Drug therapy has become the concern of many people. Among the reasons are the following:
 - A. Most drug therapy must be closely monitored and carefully dosed. This dose may have to be altered frequently due to the nature of the particular disease process or other concomitant ones the patient may have. Often enough doses are augmented in order not to cure but to mask the sufferings of the patient.
 - B. Since chemicals and synthetic products are used, toxic effects often occur. Often one has to weigh the advantages of drug use against the side effects and the choice is not always clear.
 - C. Therapeutic drugs are usually very expensive.
 - D. The decision to use drug prescriptions depends greatly on the disease process. Acute, life-threatening diseases usually require it, however, for chronic, non-curable diseases (such as arthritis) the necessity of drugs is more subjective. Often doctors over-prescribe medicines in order not to lose their clients. The psychologic makeup of the

patient plays a large role in the decision to use a drug. See the use of placebos in conventional medicine.

- 4) Other alternative methods are available to go with herbs, nutrients and aromas, and they have proved efficient too; this include breathing techniques, massage, acupuncture, shiatsu, yoga, homeopathy, herbal medicine, and for Muslims in particular: special Du'as, Zamzam, cupping (a cure for all diseases as related in on Haadith), eating or dietary habits, prayers, reciting Qur'aan, etc. There are literally hundreds of types of unconventional medicines that cure or prevent diseases. An unconventional medicine is any type of therapy that is different from traditional medicine in the way that it focuses on a patient's mind, body, and inner energy, to aid in healing. Some, use magic charms (in a certain Haadith, Islam teach us that charms and amulets are Haram because they do not cure but just get rid of the Shaytan), colour therapy, sound therapy, and juice therapy, in which natural juices are used as tonic therapies, flower therapy, nutritional therapy, hydrotherapy, imagery, hypnosis, reflexology, aromatherapy, physiotherapy, naturopathy, naprapathy, allopathy, osteopathy, preventive Medicine, Hakim's medicine (inherited therapies), music therapy, Ayurveda, detoxification therapies, Qigong, Taiji, and so on and so forth.
- 5) Some ahadith related to natural medicines in Islam: Allah t'ala tells us in Surah An'am, verse 17: *"If God touch thee with affliction, none can remove it but He;"* (VIII: 7)
And, once again, in Surah Bani Isra'il, this idea is even made more clear: *"We send down (stage by stage) in the*

Qur'an that which is a healing and a mercy to those who believe... " (XVII: 82)

It was reported by Jabir bin AbduUah that Prophet Muhammad (SAAS) said: *"For any disease there is a cure, and when the cure matches the disease, the person recovers by the will of Allah"*

It was reported by Abu Hurairah that the Prophet (SAAS) said: *"Allah never inflicts a disease unless he makes a cure for it."*

Prophet Muhammad (SAAS: Allah's Peace and benediction be Upon Him) said: *"An ounce of prevention is better than a ton of treatment."*

The Prophet Muhammad (SAAS) said: *"Fast (the month of Ramadan) so that to heal your bodies from diseases."*

- 6) These therapies, contrary to conventional medicine, are known to be non-toxic, effective and safe when administered by a professional. Often enough they replace successfully harsh treatments prescribed in conventional medicine, even treatments like chemotherapy or surgery or infertility (Doheny, 2002).
- 7) However, unconventional therapies must be used hand in hand with conventional medicine. They complete each other even if, in some cases, they cannot replace each other. For example, Essential oils have the ability to help heal and prevent infections. During World War One, chemist Maurice Gattefosse experimented with the use of essential oils for the treatment of soldiers war wounds. In July of 1910, he burned his hands in a laboratory explosion. He rolled in grass to put out the flames, but gas gangrenous sores began to appear. He applied essential oils of terpene-free lavender to the burns and noticed a sudden arrest of gasification tissues. (Nash,1996:19)

Quick healing, arrest of blisters, and masking of gangrenous odours were all achieved in record time.

Reflexology has helped many women having PMS (pre-menstrual symptoms) problems (Jacobs, 1996 :193) .

Pepermint oil dropped in the back of the neck is very efficient to calm headaches. (Earle & Rose,1996)

William D. Kelley, DDS was a dentist who claimed to have healed himself of pancreatic cancer with his own therapy, in 1964. His program includes a specific dietary program, detoxification, neurological stimulation through chiropractic adjustment and supplements of vitamins, minerals and enzymes (Peter Barry Chowka, 1999).

- 8) The treatments mentioned here are just an indicator of what you can find in the market and what sort of answers you may find if you go see a practitian.
- 9) The treatments given here will not correspond to the needs or the health condition of certain people but will suit others. Certain herbs for instance damage the liver in some people but are safe in others, and it all depends on the dosage and the time frame in which you are using those herbs.
- 10) Note that herbs take months, even years to take effect, but when they do, they really work in harmony with your body.**
- 11) Anybody who has a serious disease ought to start to study about his/her disease especially alternative methods. Sometimes learning the art of breathing or makinf slight changes in lifestyles make all the difference. Only a qualified person can help you determine what is going on in your body.

The alternative methods aim to make the body heal itself with Allah's help. Not just take away the symptoms only, like very often with Allopathic medicine. But discuss all treatments with a real doctor, natural or allopathic. This includes your herbalist, the holistic practitioner, the acupuncturist, the chiropractor and all other non-conventional practitioners.

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 30. <http://www.islamset.com/sitemap.html>
 31. A very nice set of articles: <http://www.ummah.net.pk/dajjal/fertil1.html>
 32. Encyclopedia of herbs and treatments with references: <http://www.mothenature.com/Library/Ency/>
- Islamic Medicine (Edited by Shahid Athar , M. D.): <http://www.islam-usa.com/im1.html>**

Sexual Issues and the Muslim mind

Sexual Education:

Sex education in Islam has never been taboo and it suffices to listen to scholars of Islam, the first one is our Prophet (SAAS) to be convinced that no question is a bad question.

Many modern Muslim parents feel too shy to talk about sexual issues, especially in their families, creating tension where there should not be any. They often prefer to delegate this question to other people or leave their children in complete ignorance even to the time of marriage!

Allah who has sent the Noble Qur'an as a guidance for mankind, discusses in His Sacred Book subjects as diverse as reproduction, creation, family life, embryology, menstruation and even ejaculation.

And Prophet Muhammed (SAAS), who has been sent to us as an example, discussed with his companions many aspects of their sexual life including sexual positions or ways to enhance libido.

The problem is that Islamic societies of today are far from Islam and people in these societies have confused shyness and modesty with taboo and ignorance!

Islam says: "Do not divulge secrets of your sex with your wife to another person, nor describe her physical feature to anyone" but Islam does not prohibit to ask general questions about sex. Prophet Mohammad (PBUH) has said: *"Blessed are the women of the Ansar (citizens of Medina). Shyness did not stand in their way seeking knowledge about their religion.*

How can parents encourage their children to read Qur'an and ignore passages in the Qur'an related to the subject?

"So let man consider from what he is created. From a gushing fluid that issues between the loins and the ribs."

"Your women are a tilth for you, so enjoy your tilth the way you wish, and make an introduction to yourself."

How can parents refuse to answer basic questions and not instill a negative feeling about sex in their children?

How can they ignore their children's questions when it is so easy to access information on the subject by sometimes illicit or wrong channels?

How can parents shut their children from anatomy or biology books and give the impression this is pornography and not something natural and a complete part of life?

How can they prevent their children from seeing animals reproducing in nature when the sight offers itself before their eyes?

How can parents ignore the look of wonder in their children's face when they see their mother's growing belly or they witness their women folk going through the menstruation and pregnancy process?

Maybe parents think that the more they talk about it, the more their children will be tempted by it?

Sex education is not about giving licence to children to play around, it is about knowing the anatomy and physiology of human body, the act of sex given with the act of love, the reproduction and family life, the hygiene relative to sexuality, the prevention of sexually transmitted diseases and unwanted pregnancy, the necessity of marriage for peacefulness and for completing one's faith, to acknowledge one's pulsions as normal and a gift from Allaah and a way to give Sadaqah to ones companion.

Western ideas of sexual education:

In Western schools, sex education is being given before or during puberty. But teachers are told to give the technical aspects of sex education without telling the students about moral values or how to make the right decisions. The result is that children are not told about abstinence, but about prevention!

The secular sex education devoid of morality promoted by educators like Dr. Sol Gordon is very far from the teachings of Islam. Some modernists believed in:

Nudity at home. Children can see their parents' organs and some even witness their mother giving birth. No wonder that 75% of all child molestations and incests (500,000 per year) occur by a close relative (parent, step parent or another family member) in a familiar surrounding.

A child's playing with genitals of another child is a "naive exploration". However, we have heard of small children raping other small children after such explorations. Sexual pulsions are present in children even before puberty and it is known that even fetuses have erections!

The idea that children caught reading 'dirty' magazines should not be made to feel guilty implies that those children will see people and sex life as a stereotyped image or a mechanical thing where love has no part. Besides, sexual morality is not instructed in these magazines. On the contrary, free sex is showed as the norm!

Gordon explains: " If your daughter or son is already sexually active, instead of telling them to stop it, the parents moral duty is to protect their health and career by providing them information and means for contraception and avoiding VD". Abstinence has been taught to children and many children have admitted enjoying it because most of the time they were already engaged in sexual acts but wished they had waited to

be more mature and more prepared for it. The health hazards of early sex include sexual trauma, increase in incidence of cervical cancer, sexually transmitted diseases and teenage pregnancy. A variety of injuries are possible and do happen when sex organs are not ready for sex in terms of full maturation. Some of these injuries have a long lasting effect. In fact 25% of college freshman boys during a survey responded by saying that if they have paid for the food, and the girl does not go all the way, they have a right to force her to have sex.

Even Bertrand Russell, who strongly supports the libertarian view, had to accept that some restrictions in sexual morality are necessary. He writes, "I am not suggesting that there should be no morality and no self-restraint in regard to sex, any more than in regard to food. In regard to food we have restraints of three kinds, those of law, those of manners, and those of health. We regard it wrong to steal food, to take more than our share at a common meal, and to eat in ways that are likely to make us ill. Restraints of a similar kind are essential where sex is concerned, but in this case they are much more complex and involve much more self-control." (Russell, *Marriage and Morals*, p. 293-294)

What sex signifies for Muslims :

Contrary to what is often taught in western cultures, Islam does not consider women (or men) an object of sexual pleasure that is only gratifying for one self. While the sex outside marriage is a punishable sin, sex with one's spouse is an act of worship and an act of Sadaqah.

Prophet Muhammed (PBUH) said: "*When one of you have sex with your wife it is a rewardable act of charity*". The companions were surprised and asked, "*but we do it out of our desire, how can it be counted as a charity?*". The Prophet replied "*if you had done with a forbidden women, it would have*

been counted as a sin, but if you do it in legitimacy it is counted as a charity?"

Islam recognizes the strong sexual urge and desire for reproduction. However, it does not make it the aim of marriage, nor does it make reproduction a necessity in marriage. If it were so, our prophet (SAAS) would have divorced most of his wives who did not have children with him!

In Islam the marriage of a man and woman is not just a financial and legal living arrangement, but love and joy are part of the contract.

Allah says:

"Among His signs is that he created consorts for you from among yourself, so that you may find tranquility with them, and (He) set love and compassion between you. Verily in this are signs for people who reflect."

Islamic sex education should be taught at home, starting at an early age, and before giving education about the anatomy and physiology, sexual morality should be well established.

The father should teach the son and mother should teach her daughter.

While small, children can be taught about intercourse vaguely, mentioning the verse:

"They are your garments, and you are their garments"

When they grow up, they should be taught what is necessary at the moment the need emerges.

Often small children are satisfied by pretty, unsophisticated answers while teenagers need more details.

Different stages of children sexual education:

As a child goes through different developmental stages, his sexual education should too be planned in stages, and each

lesson should be appropriate to the age of the child. Note that not all children mature at the same rhythm, so parents should apply discernment.

7-10 Years: the Age of Discernment

At this age, the child should know the etiquette of entering the parents' room, and the rules concerning looking at others.

Allah, subhanahu wa ta'ala, says, *"O you who believe! Let your slaves and the children among you who have not come to the age of puberty ask your permission (before they come to your presence), on three occasions: before morning prayer (salatul Fajr), and when you put off your clothes for the noon rest, and after the late-night prayer (salatul Isha). These three times are of privacy for you, outside these times, there is no sin on you or on them to move about, attending to each other. Thus Allah makes clear the Signs to you. And Allah is All-Knowing, All-Wise."* [24:58]

Allah, subhanahu wa ta'ala, says, *"And say to the believing women that they should lower their gaze and guard their private parts, that they should not display their beauty and ornaments except what ordinarily appear thereof. That they should draw their veils over their bosoms and not display their beauty except to their husbands, their fathers, their husbands' fathers, their sons, their husbands' sons, their brothers, or their brothers' sons, or their sisters' sons."* [24:31]

Allah orders us, *"Tell the believing men to lower their gaze, and protect their private parts. This is purer for them. Verily, Allah is All-Aware of what they do."* [24:30]

The Prophet, sallallahu alayhe wa sallam said, *"Beware of entering [places] where women are!"* (Bukhari and Muslim)
Children ten years and older should not share the same bed even if they are of the same sex, as the Prophet advised, saying, *"Enjoin your children to perform salah when they are seven,*

and spank them for it when they are ten, and let them sleep in separate beds." (al-Hakim and Abu Dawud)

10-14 Years: Adolescence

At this age, the child should learn how to avoid sexual arousal, and should be protected from it.

"And when the children among you come to puberty, then let them also ask for permission, as those senior to them (in age). Thus Allah makes clear His Signs for you. And Allah is All-Knowing, All-Wise." [24:59]

The Prophet, sallallahu alayhe wa sallam, said, *"A man should not look at the awrah of another man nor a woman of a woman, nor should a man go under one cloth with another man, nor a woman with another woman."* (Muslim) He also said to a man he saw uncovering his thigh, *"Cover your thigh, for the thigh is awrah."* (al-Hakim)

The Prophet, sallallahu alayhe wa sallam, said, *"It is better for one of you to be pierced by an iron needle in the head than to touch the hand of a woman that is not allowed to him."* (Tabarani)

This sin is considered a fornication of the hand, as the Prophet, sallallahu alayhe wa sallam, said, *"The eyes fornicate, and the hands fornicate, and the feet fornicate, and the intimate parts fornicate."* (Ahmad)

Is there a person purer than Muhammad, sallallahu alayhe wa sallam? And in spite of that he said, *"I do not shake women's hands."* (Ahmad) He also said, *"I do not touch women's hands."* (Tabarani)

14-16 Years: Puberty

When the child should know the etiquette of sexual intercourse, if he or she is ready to get married in the near future.

The Prophet, sallallahu alayhe wa sallam, said, *"Young men, those of you who can support a wife should marry, for it keeps you from looking at women and preserves your chastity."* (Bukhari)

The Prophet, sallallahu alayhe wa sallam, said, *"A woman is normally sought as a wife for her wealth, her beauty, her nobility, or her deen (religiousness), so choose a religious woman and you will prosper."* (Muslim)

The Prophet, sallallahu alayhe wa sallam, said, *"When someone with whose religion and character you are satisfied, asks to marry your daughter, agree to his request. If you do not do so, there will be corruption and great evil on earth."* (Tirmithi)

The Prophet, sallallahu alayhe wa sallam, said, *"A woman who has been previously married has more right concerning her person than her guardian, and a virgin's consent must be asked about herself, her consent being her silence."* (Bukhari and Muslim)

Jabir Ibn Abdullah, radhiallahu anhu said concerning his wife, *"(Before marrying her) I used to hide behind a tree to see her."*

The Prophet, sallallahu alayhe wa sallam, said, *"When one of you intends to marry a woman if he is able to look at what would induce him to marry her he should do so."* (Abu Dawud)

About mahrams, the Prophet, sallallahu alayhe wa sallam, said, *"What is forbidden by reason of kinship is forbidden by reason of suckling."* (Bukhari)

These are considered maharim because Allah mentions them in the Holy Qur'an, *"And marry not women whom your fathers married, except what has already passed; indeed it was shameful and most hateful, and an evil way. Forbidden to you (for marriage) are: your mothers, your daughters, your sisters, your brother's daughters, your sister's daughters, your foster mother who breastfed you, your foster milk suckling sisters, your wives' mothers, your stepdaughters under your*

guardianship, born of your wives to whom you have gone in - but there is no sin on you if you have not done so (to marry their daughters), the wives of your sons who spring from your loins, and two sisters in wedlock at the same time, except for what has already passed; verily Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful." [4:22-23]

Such was the answer of the Prophet, sallallahu alayhe wa sallam, to Khawlah Bint Hakeem, who asked him if a woman should make ghusl when she has a sexual dream. He said, *"No ghusl on her unless she has a discharge, similarly there is no ghusl on the man unless he ejaculates."* (Ahmad and Nasa'i)

The Prophet, sallallahu alayhe wa sallam, said, *"When he sits between her arms and legs, and the two organs touch, and his organ disappears (in hers), there should be ghusl, whether he ejaculated or not."* (Muslim)

"They ask you about menstruation, say: it is a harmful thing, therefore keep away from women during menses and go not unto them until they are clean." [2:222]

The Prophet, sallallahu alayhe wa sallam, said, *"The menstruating woman and the one in a state of sexual impurity must not read anything from the Qur'an."* (Tirmidhi).

It is a desirable Sunnah that the groom puts his hands on the bride's head and pray for her.

The Prophet, sallallahu alayhe wa sallam, taught us to say, *"O Allah, I ask You her goodness, and the goodness of the inborn dispositions which You have given her, and I solicit Your protection from her evil, and the evil of the inborn dispositions which You have given her."* (Abu Dawud and Ibn Majah)

The Prophet, sallallahu alayhe wa sallam, said, *"Verily, affection is from Allah and repugnance is from Satan who wants you to hate what Allah has allowed to you. So when your wife comes to you, ask her to make two raka'at with you and then say, 'O Allah, bless my wife for me, and bless me for her."*

O Allah, unite between us in good, and if You separate us, separate us in good." (Abu Shaybah)

The groom is encouraged to please his bride and treat her with kindness. It is a sunnah that he presents to her something to drink or to eat. Asmaa bint Yazeed, radhiallahu anha, said, *"I adorned Aisha, radhiallahu anha, for her wedding night, and the Prophet, sallallahu alayhe wa sallam, came to her side and brought a big cup of milk from which he drank and then presented it to her, but she blushed and lowered her head."* (Ahmad)

The couple is encouraged to engage in foreplay before having intercourse. The Prophet, sallallahu alayhe wa sallam, said, *"One of you should not fall upon his wife like the way an animal does, let there be a messenger between them."* He was asked, *"And what is the messenger?"* He replied, *"Kissing and talking."* (Ad-Daylami)

Before starting intercourse, it is a sunnah to make the following supplication, *"In the name of Allah. O Allah, keep Satan away from us, and keep Shaytan away from (the offspring) that which You grant us."* (Bukhari)

They are free to have intercourse in any position they wish, as Allah, subhanahu wa ta'ala, says, *"Your wives are as a tilth unto you, so approach your tilth when or how you wish."* [2:223]

Having intercourse on the night before Friday is desirable as the Prophet said, *"Whoever makes ghusl on Friday to clean himself from janabah (i.e., after having intercourse), then left for salah, it is as if he offered a camel in sacrifice."* (Bukhari)

After intercourse, it is desirable that they take a bath (ghusl) before going to sleep. If this presents a hardship on them they should perform ablution (wudhu) and can postpone ghusl until before Fajr salah. If they want to have intercourse a second time, it is desirable that the man performs wudhu first. For the

Prophet said, *"If one of you had intercourse with his wife and then wants to come to her again, it is better for him to perform wudhu, for it gives him vigor to come again."* (Muslim)

It is strictly unlawful for the couple to engage in sodomy, as the Prophet said, *"Cursed is the one who comes to his wife in her anus."* (Ahmad and Abu Dawud) A man asked Ibn Abbas, radhiallahu anhu, about one engaging in sodomy with his wife, and Ibn Abbas said, *"This man is asking me about kufr." The Prophet sallallahu alayhe wa sallam has even said, "Whoever has intercourse [with his wife] during her menses, or commits sodomy with her, or comes to a diviner, then he disbelieved in what was revealed to Muhammad."* (Tirmithi)

Prophet sallallahu alayhe wa sallam said, *"When the man invites his wife to his bed, but she refuses, and so he spends the night being angry at her, then the angels will curse her until the next morning."* (Bukhari)

Concerning contraception, the Qur'an says, *"Women are your fields. Go then into your fields as you please."* (2:223)

16 and Above: Young Adults

The unmarried young men and women should learn sexual abstinence, and the dangers of adultery and fornication (zina).

The Prophet, sallallahu alayhe wa sallam, said, *"It is written on the son of Adam his lot of zina (fornication/adultery), that will inevitably afflict him. The zina of the eyes is looking, the zina of the ears is hearing, the zina of the tongue is talking, the zina of the hand is assaulting, and the zina of the foot is walking; the heart desires and wishes, and the genitals affirm or deny."* (Bukhari and Muslim)

The Prophet, sallallahu alayhe wa sallam, said, *"No Muslim whose eyesight falls inadvertently on the beauties of a woman and then he lowers his gaze, but Allah will credit for him a*

worship he will appreciate its sweetness in his heart." (Ahmad, at-Tabarani)

The Prophet, sallallahu alayhe wa sallam, said to Ali Ibn Abi Talib, *"O Ali! Do not let the second look follow the first. The first look is allowed to you but not the second."* (Tirmithi, Ahmad and Abu Dawud)

Allah subhanahu warns us saying, "O you who believe! Follow not the footsteps of Satan. And whosoever follows the footsteps of Satan, then verily he commands what is indecent and wrong." [24:21]

One of the Satan's means to tempt people into sin, is privacy with non-mahram women, for this reason the Shar'iah has prohibited it. The Prophet, sallallahu alayhe wa sallam, said, *"A man does not meet privately with a woman without the Satan being the third (present)."* (Tirmithi)

Allah says, *"And those who invoke not with Allah any other god, nor kill such life as Allah has forbidden, except for just cause, nor commit illegal sexual intercourse; and whoever does this shall receive the punishment. The torment will be doubled to him on the Day of Resurrection, and he will abide therein in disgrace."* [25:68-69]

The Prophet, sallallahu alayhe wa sallam, said, *"Those who cannot (marry) should fast, for it is a means of cooling sexual passion."* (Bukhari)

One good way to educate about chastity is to remember the many verses in the Qur'an warning against zinaa. Parents can consider the story of Yusuf, who is the perfect example of the chaste man, *"And she, in whose house he was, sought to seduce him, she closed the doors and said, 'Come on, O you.' He said, 'Allah forbid!'"* [12:23]

The Islamic Shari'ah strictly prohibits the practice of perverted act, such as homosexuality or fornication, which is mentioned in many places in the Holy Qur'an.

The story of Prophet Lot's people, who were addicted to this practice, is the best example. Prophet Lot, alayhes salam, said to his people, "*Verily, you do sodomy with men, and rob the wayfarer! And practice all wickedness in your meetings.*" [29:29] And he said to them, "*Of all the creatures of the world, will you approach males, and leave those whom Allah has created for you to be your wives? Nay, you are a trespassing people!*" [26:165-166] But their answer to Prophet Lot, alayhessalam, was, "*Bring us the Wrath of Allah if you are telling us the Truth.*" [29:29] And so Allah gave them the punishment they deserved, "*And We rained on them a rain of torment. And how evil was the rain of those who had been warned.*" [26:173]

Ibn Abbas narrated that the Prophet, sallallahu alayhe wa sallam, said, "*Whomever you found committing the crime of Lot's people [i.e., sodomy], then kill both partners.*" (Ahmad)

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Some opinions about Islamic sexuality:

"They [your wives] are a vestment for you, and you a vestment for them.... So now lie with them, and seek what God has prescribed for you" (2:183-187).

Concerning the wholly positive and appreciative valuation of human sexuality in Islam, for example, Hyde and DeLamater write:

"The Muslim believed that sexual intercourse was one of the finest pleasures of life, reflecting the teachings of the great prophet Muhammad. Moreover, extraordinary prowess is attributed to Muhammad, who had several wives." [Janet Shibley Hyde and John D. Delameter. Understanding Human Sexuality. New York: The MacGraw-Hill Companies, Inc., 1997. p. 4.]

Abdelwahab Bouhdiba writes about Islam's view of sexuality: "*Islam in no way tries to depreciate, still less to deny the sexual and invests it with such a transcendental significance that any trace of guilt is removed form it. Taken up this way sexuality is full of positivity. Islamic life becomes an alternation and complementarity of the invocation of the divine Word and the exercise of physical love. The dialogue with Being and the dialogue of the sexes punctuate our daily lives.*" [Abdelwahab Bouhdiba. Sexuality in Islam. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1985. p. 8.]

"The Islamic view of the couple based on the pre-established, premeditated harmony of the sexes presupposed a profound complementarity of the masculine and the feminine. The harmonious complementarity is creative and procreative. By that is meant that the extension of life, which is happiness and appeasement of tension, but also satisfaction and legitimate pleasure.... Islam conceives of sexes and their union,

their differentiation and their mutual adjustment. Hence the unique value attributed to each of the two sexes.”

So there will be sex in Paradise between those who will go to heaven and the houris. *"Paradise is a place of sexual pleasure."* God Himself preordained it. Bouhdiba writes: *"Pleasure there is also carnal. For paradise are people with houris. These creatures are as feminine as can be imagined, their faces white, green, yellow and red at once.... On their breasts is written the name of their [earthly] husband, linked with one of the beautiful names of God.... All the houris are in love with their husbands..."*

Apparently, the celibacy of Jesus and the love of women of Muhammad will have consequences in the paradise, for Bouhdiba writes: *"In other words, the Christian will be asexual in paradise, whereas the Muslim will experience infinite orgasm."*

In essence: *"The meaning of paradisiacal pleasure is certainly that it takes the body seriously. Far from derealizing our desires, Islam teaches us to realize them more fully. The evocation of Paradise is a vigilant oneirism. It is not the theological that is at issue here, but the psychological. The image of the Muslim paradise is positive and affirmative of self. Islam does not repress the libido. In paradise our desires will be accommodated, taken seriously. This means that the peace of paradise is achieved through self-fulfillment. For paradise is first of all a meeting with others. Love is a sense multiplied by the presence not only of wives, but also of houris. This pluralization of love implies its own transcendence in others. In paradise everyone will have at least one companion, for 'there is no celibacy in paradise' (ma fil jannati min a'za)." [Bouhdiba, Sexuality in Islam, p.84]*

In the Islamic construction of sexuality:

“Sex or human sexuality is a wholly positive, constructive, and wholesome thing, a gift from God. Except angels, all beings created by God are sexual beings. Both men and women need sexual gratification from the age of puberty and continue to need it up to their ripest old age. Sex or the wanting, seeking, and obtaining of sexual gratification, beyond the age of puberty, is a birthright of every male and female.

Sex has an independent value of its own. It is not merely a means to an end, viz., procreation. Sexual intercourse can be and is, for the most part, engaged in solely for pleasure. Natural and normal sexual activity is between the male and the female of the species. This rules out bestiality in every shape and form.

But unnatural sexual activity between persons of the same sex (sodomy and lesbianism) is a fact of life and has to be checked and punished. In this category falls, too, heterosexual sodomy, or anal intercourse between man and woman, which is to be checked and punished, too.

Islam recognizes masturbation, but there is no general consensus whether it should be punished.

Between the male and the female, the natural (biologically intended) sexual act is vaginal intercourse, i.e., the penetration of the vagina by the penis with the intention of sexual intercourse and the achieving of orgasm by both.

Other forms of sexual acts between the man and the woman as, for instance, when she is menstruating or when he is bodily incapacitated of performing the natural sex act, but as a matter of choice, too, if the two so choose, are permissible. These acts may include oral sex (fellatio or cunnilingus), intercourse between the thighs of the woman (called in English

interfemoral intercourse and masturbation of the penis by the hand of the woman. (Some Muslims take the position that, whereas masturbation by one's own hand is forbidden, it is permissible by the hand of the woman.)

Penetration of the vagina while the woman is menstruating is categorically forbidden.

Penetration of the woman's anus (i.e., anal intercourse with the woman) is categorically forbidden.

Sodomy (male homosexuality) and/or any contact or touching between two males, which may be sexuality motivated, intended, or symbolic is categorically forbidden.

Lesbianism (i.e., sexual activity between women) and/or any contact or touching between two females, which may be sexually motivated, intended, or symbolic is probably not forbidden, but is strongly condemned. (The Qur'an and *Sunnah* do not mention lesbianism explicitly, but, given the spirit of the teaching of Islam on sexuality, lesbianism is as good as forbidden.)

Incest is categorically forbidden.

Celibacy is categorically forbidden, for it is neither natural, nor desirable, nor achievable by humankind—neither by men, nor by women.

All in all, Islam categorically forbids what it calls *zina* and the *Shariah*, or Islamic law, prescribes capital punishment for every act of *zina*. *Zina*, or unlawful sex, is a comprehensive concept and includes within its scope sexual intercourse outside of marriage and concubinage. As such, categorically forbidden are fornication (premarital sex), adultery (extramarital sex), homosexuality, and/or all that falls outside marriage and concubinage.

Men and women are exhorted and admonished to be good at sexual intercourse and fully mindful of the necessity that it must produce full and complete satisfaction for both, i.e.,

especially the man must see to it that the woman reaches orgasm, too.

Not only sex education (in the physical aspects of sex) but also sexuality education (of the place, significance, and role of sex in Islam, and the human objectives, social demands, and ethics and morality of sexual relations between men and women) are the necessary accompaniments and imperatives of sexuality in Islam.

The Prophet admonished his followers not to come upon their wives, concubines, and slave girls like animals. He made foreplay mandatory and for the man waiting, too, until the time the woman was ready for the act of sexual intercourse itself. When done lawfully (according to the *Shariah*, or Islamic law) and properly (with due advance physical preparation and psychological anticipation, and in the spirit of cooperation and the pursuit of mutual pleasure, and, above all, without haste), sexual intercourse between the man and the woman between whom exists love and compassion and desire for each other, does not only bring supreme pleasure to the parties to the sex act, but is something akin to prayer and, as such, pleasing to God. It self-actualizes humanity and fulfills the divine purpose behind God's Creation.

It must be mentioned, too, that Islam takes a very, very serious view of accusing someone of *zina*, i.e., unlawful sex. While the *Shairah*, or Islamic law, prescribes one hundred lashes for each party to the *zina*, in some cases death by stoning, for both parties guilty of *zina*, it demands four eye witness to the alleged unlawful sex act. These four witnesses must be four reliable Muslim men. In case four witnesses are not forthcoming, the accuser(s) become guilty of the crime of slander for which the *Shariah* prescribes eighty lashes. Hence, in the absence of confession by the parties, conviction for *zina* in a *Shariah* court of law is virtually impossible. However, in

the case of a pregnant woman, her pregnancy is treated as the living proof of her guilt.”

Ill effects of sexual deprivation:

Ibn Sina’s *Qanun*, the author of the most famous treatise on medicine in the world during the Medieval Age, used by Muslims and Europeans alike until the eighteenth century, underscore the ill effects of sexual deprivation: “When men abstain from sexual intercourse, the semen accumulates, turns cold, and acquires poisonous [qualities]. The semen sends to the heart and brain harmful and poisonous fumes.... You should know that the retention of semen is extremely harmful, and may cause one of the testicles to recede.” [B.F. Musallam. *Sex and Society in Islam*. Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 1983. p. 133.]

Muhammad Zafeeruddin Nadvi quotes a number of sources on the ill effects of sexual deprivation due to the absence of the discharge of the semen. He quotes Allama Nafeesi: “And when bursting with excitement and with a throbbing body, seminal discharge is a must, since if it is withheld and the seminal reservoir is overfull, it will stifle the body heat and weaken it. And it must ultimately come to pass that it becomes cold and make the body cold also. If retained long enough the seminal fluid becomes like fainting fits and epilepsy. The seminal fluid that is straining to come out must be provided outlet so that the tense conditions may be relieved and the body may be enabled to take food in properly.” [Muhammad Zafeeruddin Nadvi. *Modesty and Chastity in Islam*. Tr. Sharif Ahmad Khan. Kuwait: Islamic Book Publishers, 1982. pp. 60-61.]

Next, Nadvi quotes Muhammad bin-e-Zakaria:

“[Because of] abstinence, if continued over a long period, the nerves are weakened, production of semen (spermato genesis) is stopped and the male sex organ may become shriveled.” [Muhammad Zafeeruddin Nadvi. *Modesty and Chastity in Islam*. Tr. Sharif Ahmad Khan. Kuwait: Islamic Book Publishers, 1982. pp. 60-61.]

Finally, he quotes Allama Navavi: “The demand of strong passion for sexual union sometimes becomes so overwhelming that if it is not met soon enough; it harms the body, the heart and the eyesight.” [Muhammad Zafeeruddin Nadvi. *Modesty and Chastity in Islam*. Tr. Sharif Ahmad Khan. Kuwait: Islamic Book Publishers, 1982. pp. 60-61.]

Nadvi’s conclusion is: “All these opinions convince us that marriage is essential for health, since seminal fluid, if not discharged at the time when it is demanding a vent, it affects physical health along with other detriments, both material and spiritual.” [Muhammad Zafeeruddin Nadvi. *Modesty and Chastity in Islam*. Tr. Sharif Ahmad Khan. Kuwait: Islamic Book Publishers, 1982. pp. 60-61.]

Nadvi quotes Allama Nafeesi again: “Sexual union enhances body heat and makes the body accept the food, makes man happy, lessens anger, keeps away filthy ideas and is helpful in the cure of so many ailments caused by the phlegm and the black bile. Abstinence is injurious for health, and those given habitually to abstinence become the victims of many diseases.” [Muhammad Zafeeruddin Nadvi. *Modesty and Chastity in Islam*. Tr. Sharif Ahmad Khan. Kuwait: Islamic Book Publishers, 1982. p. 62.]

The practice of delaying marriage must be combated by convenient means if the dangers arising from its continuation and spread are to be avoided.

Marwan Ibrahim Al-Kaysi writes: “There is no doubt that sex is necessary for the development of the individual’s

personality, and for the society as a whole. Sexual development is intimately connected with feelings of personal worth and the assurance of being loved. Sexual deprivation endangers mental health, hinders good relationships and creates inefficiency in the society. But sex can be a destructive force if not controlled and channeled through marriage. It will then be a force working against the individual, the institution of marriage and family, and the society as a whole. In fact, 'sex is capable of impelling individuals, reckless of the consequences while under its spell, towards behaviour [sic] which may imperil or disrupt the co-operative relationships upon which social life depends'." [Marwan Ibrahim Al-Kaysi. *Morals and Manners in Islam: A Guide to Islamic Adab*. Leicester, England: The Islamic Foundation, 1987. p. 40.]

Intercourse and morality:

Islam holds a person responsible even for the use of his or her body. You are not allowed to abuse your own body or harm it. Allah says, "*The hearing, the sight, the heart all of these shall be questioned of.*" (17:38) Describing the day of judgement, He says, "*On the day when their tongues, their hands, and their feet shall bear witness against them as to what they were doing.*" (24:24) "*On that day We will put a seal upon their mouths, and their hands shall speak to Us and their feet shall bear witness of what they were earning.*" (36:65)

Imam Zaynu'l-'Abidin, in his *Risalatul 'l-Huquq*, describes the rights which a person's tongue, ears, eyes, feet, hands, stomach and sexual parts have on him. If a person misuses or abuses his body, then he is guilty of infringing the rights of his own body and also the rights of God who has given the body as a trust to us. The Qur'an says, "*The believers are...those who protect their sexual organs except from their*

spouse's. . . Therefore, whosoever seeks more beyond that in sexual gratification], then they are the transgressors."(23: 5-6) Islam does not allow a person to harm or destroy himself; and sin or immorality is a means of perdition. This limitation is based on the love and concern which the Merciful God has for us. "*Allah does not desire to make any impediment for you, but He desires to purify you and to complete His blessings upon you.*" (5:6)

First signs of sexual impulses:

Sexual desire is aroused in human beings at the age of puberty. Puberty is known in Islamic law as *al-bulugh*, or *Tamyeez*, (coming of age as a man and woman). There are three signs of puberty (*bulugh*).

“Puberty in Boys

1. **Discharging semen** as a result of wet dreams, known as *inzaalul-manyyi*. Allah (SWT) states: "*But when the children among you come of age, let them also ask for permission, as do those senior to them in age.*" (*Al-Qur'an*, 24-59) In a hadith, the Messenger of Allah (saas) said: "*Friday bath (ghuslul-Jum'ah) is mandatory upon anyone who has experienced a wet dream.*" (Bukhari/Muslim) The point in this hadith is that Islamic obligations are not incumbent on anyone until they reach the age of *bulugh*.
2. **Appearance of hair** around the pubic area is another sign of puberty. If a person sees that even without wet dreams, he or she has attained puberty. This may happen at the age of thirteen or fourteen, and parents should inform girls and boys about these signs.
3. **Reaching 15 years of age**: When the person reaches 15, he or she is a man or a woman, and anything that is obligatory on a man or woman is obligatory on him or her from that time on.

In a hadith reported by Abdullah Bin Umar (raa), he said: "My parents brought me to the Messenger of Allah on the eve of the Uhud Campaign and I was fourteen years old, so the Prophet (saas) did not enlist me in fighting." But a year later in the Campaign of Al-Khandaqq, I was fifteen, so this time the Prophet (saas) enlisted me in combat." (Muslim)

This hadith indicates the age of 15 is the legal age for a Muslim boy or girl to be responsible for his or her religion as well as worldly responsibilities. Some of us who reside in the western world, seem to think adulthood depends on State laws. In some states it is 18, while in others it is 19, or 21, and so on. This is a very serious mistake, as the juvenile will reach puberty (*bulugh*) and adulthood, but go on without observing his or her Islamic duties, such as Salat, fasting, or being restrained from that which is prohibited.

Puberty in Girls

Girls reach puberty and adulthood when they experience the above three signs. However, **they have a fourth sign**, that is, **menstruation** (*hayd*). Whenever a girl experiences it, she is a woman even if she is 12 years old. At that time, the *Qalam*, the pen of responsibilities, begins to flow and to record the deeds of the servant, good or bad. It is interesting that in the western world the case is the reverse. You see, when a juvenile reaches the age of puberty in Al-Islam he or she should be careful about anything he or she does or says. On the contrary, in the West when the person comes of age, he or she is allowed to do things which are detrimental to his or her well being. They are licensed to read, watch, and listen to so-called adult material, as if when one is an adult it is time to be irresponsible. Indeed, if puberty is attained during the days of Ramadan, say at midday, and the young person is fasting, he or she should continue his or her fasting and there will be no obligation on

him or her to make up the fast. If he was not fasting, it is incumbent upon him to observe the rest of the day in fasting, because he has become an adult upon whom Islamic rites are obligatory. Girls in menstruation can't observe half day, nor should they make that half day up." [Taken from: "For Whom Fasting is Mandatory?"]

Since the sexual urge begins at puberty and as Islam says that sexual urge should be fulfilled only through marriage, it has allowed marriage as soon as the boy and the girl reach the age of puberty. In the case of girls, it not only allows them to be married as soon as they become mature, but also recommends such marriage. It is based on such teachings that Islam discourages girls from postponing their marriage because of education; instead, it says that girls should get married and then continue their education if they wish to do so.

Physical maturity by itself, however, is not enough for a person to handle the marriage responsibilities; *rushd* (maturity of mind) is equally important

A recent article on the American youths says, "[Y]oung Americans entering the 21st century are far less mature than their ancestors were at the beginning of the 20th. The difference is evident in all areas of youthful development: sex, love, marriage, education and work. Physically, today's youths are maturing earlier than previous generations, but emotionally they are taking much longer to develop adult attachments." [Newsweek, Special Edition Spring 1990, p. 55]

Consequently, it is not easy for boys and girls of our atomic era to marry as soon as they become physically mature.

But studies now demonstrate that couples who cohabit before marriage are more likely to divorce than those who do not. [Newsweek, p. 57]

Glen Elder, a sociologist at University of North Carolina, has this to say about cohabitation: *"It's a relationship that attracts those, mainly men, who are looking for an easy way out and it is uncertain what, if anything, it contributes to marriage."* A twenty-four year old lady wrote the following in a letter to Ann Landers: *"...The line [in a previous letter] that struck home was from the teenager who said she knew lots of girls her age who had several partners 'just for the fun of it.' I found that odd because I was having sex at 16 and it was no fun at all. Sleeping with guys wasn't exciting or thrilling, it was degrading. It made me feel lonelier and emptier than ever. I also worried from month to month about being pregnant. That can be a real hell...if I could talk to the young girls who read your column, I would tell them that teenage sex doesn't solve problems, it creates more. It doesn't make a girl feel loved. It makes her feel cheap. I'd let them know that it doesn't make a girl 'more of a woman,' it can make her less of one."*

[*The Vancouver Sun*, Dec. 5, 1989]

Interdiction of Mu'tah (temporary marriage)

Temporary marriage is unlawful for all times to come:

Book 8, Number 3243: KITAB AL-NIKAH (THE BOOK OF MARRIAGE)

Abdullah (b. Mas'ud) reported: We were on an expedition with Allah's Messenger (may peace be upon him) and we had no women with us. We said: Should we not have ourselves castrated? He (the Holy Prophet) forbade us to do so He then granted us permission that we should contract temporary marriage for a stipulated period giving her a garment, and 'Abdullah then recited this verse: 'Those who believe do not make unlawful the good things which Allah has made lawful for you, and do not transgress. Allah does not like transgressors" (al-Qur'an, v. 87).

Book 8, Number 3251: KITAB AL-NIKAH (THE BOOK OF MARRIAGE)

Iyas b. Salama reported on the authority of his father that Allah's Messenger (may peace be upon him) gave sanction for contracting temporary marriage for three nights in the year of Autas 1847 and then forbade it.

Book 8, Number 3255: KITAB AL-NIKAH (THE BOOK OF MARRIAGE)

Sabra al-Juhanni reported on the authority of his father that while he was with Allah's Messenger (may peace be upon hm) he said: O people, I had permitted you to contract temporary marriage with women, but Allah has forbidden it (now) until the Day of Resurrection. So he who has any (woman with this type of marriage contract) he should let her off, and do not take back anything you have given to then (as dower).

Love and women

The Qur'an says, *"And among His signs is that He has created for you spouses from among yourselves so that you may live in tranquility with them; and He has created love (muhabbah) and mercy between you. Verily in that are signs for those who reflect."*(30: 21)

Imam Ja'far as-Sadiq says, "Loving (*hubb*) women is among the traditions of the prophets." (*Wasa'ilu 'sh-Shi'ah*, vol. 14, p.9) The same Imam quotes the Prophet as follows, "The statement of a husband to his wife that 'I love you' (*inniuhibbuki*) will not leave her heart ever." (*Wasa'ilu 'sh-Shi'ah*, p. 10)

There are three interesting *ahadith* in which Imam Ja'far as-Sadiq has described the love for women as a sign and cause of increase in faith. He says, "I do not think that a person's faith can increase positively unless his love for women

has increased. "(*Wasa'ilu 'sh-Shi'ah*, p. 9) In another *hadith*, he says, "Whenever a person's love for women increases, his faith increases in quality." *Wasa'ilu 'sh-Shi'ah*, p.11) In a third *hadith* he relates the love for women to the love for Ahlu'l-bayt which is an important teaching of the Qur'an. He says "Whosoever's love for us increases, his love for women must also increase." (*Wasa'ilu 'sh-Shi'ah*, p. 11)

Prevention of adultery

Allah says: *Do not go near adultery, .surely it is an indecency, and an evil way [of fulfilling sexual urge].* (17:32) Fornication and adultery have severely been condemned in the saying of the Prophet and the Imams. In Islam, pre-marital sex is considered an immoral act against the rights of Allah and one's own sexual organs.

The Prophet said, "*When one of you sees a beautiful woman, he should go to his wife. Because what is with her [i.e., wife] is same as what is with the other one.*" (*Wasa'il*, vol. 14, p. 72-73) *The same hadith is also recorded with a slight difference: The Prophet said, "O Men ! Verily the act of seeing [a beautiful woman] is from Satan, therefore whoever finds this inclination in him should go to his wife."* (*Wasa'il*, vol. 14, p. 73)

The Wedding Night:

The *hadith* says, "Take the bride to her new home during the night." (*Wasa'il*, vol. 14, p. 62) Based on this saying, it is recommended that the wedding should take place at night. After all, Allah has made the night "*so that you may rest in it.*" (10: 67)

After the bride has entered the room, the groom is recommended to take off the bride's shoes, wash her feet (in a washbowl) and then sprinkle the water around the room.

Then the groom should do wuzu and pray two rak'at sunnat prayer and then recite the following *du'a*: ***Allahummar zuqni ulfataha wa wuddaha wa rizaha bi; war zini biha, waj ma' baynana bi ahsani ijtima'in wa anfasi i'tilafin; fa innaka tuhibbul halal wa tukrihul haram.***

O Allah! bless me with her affection, love and her acceptance of me; and make me pleased with her, and bring us together in the best form of a union and in absolute harmony; surely You like lawful things and dislike unlawful things.

Then he should ask the bride to do wuzu and pray two rak'at sunnat prayer.

When they are ready to go to bed, the groom should put his hand on the bride's forehead and pray the following *du'a* while facing the *qiblah*. (So don't forget your *qiblah* compass!)

Allahumma bi amanatika akhaztuha wa bi kalimatika s-tahlaltuha. Fa in qazayta li minha waladan, faj-'alhu mubarakan taqiyyan min Shi'ati Al-i Muhammad (sal-lallahu alayhi wa alihi wa sallam) wa la taj-'al lish Shaytani fih shirkan wa la nasiba.

O Allah! I have taken her as Your trust and have made her lawful for myself by Your words. Therefore, if you have decreed for me a child from her, then make him/her blessed and pious from among the followers of the Family of Muhammad [peace be upon him and them]; and do not let the Satan have any part in him/her. [Al-'Urwah. p. 624.]

As far as the *shari'ah* is concerned, it is neither obligatory nor forbidden to have sex on the first night. It is a private decision between the newly wed couple; it has nothing to do with others. The groom should take the feelings of his bride into consideration and he should be cautious no to hurt her as breaking the hymen may be painful.

Is sex forbidden at any time in marriage?

Yes, by considering the discomfort for the women during the monthly periods, Islam has forbidden both the husband and the wife from engaging in sexual intercourse during menstruation.

The Qur'an says: "*They ask you about menstruation. Say: 'Menstruation is a discomfort (for women). Do not establish sexual relations with them during the menses and do not approach them (sexually) until the blood stops. Then when they have cleansed themselves, you go into them as Allah has commanded you.'*" (2:222)

According to the *shari'ah*, the duration of the monthly period is between three to ten days. If the bleeding was for less than three days, it is not menstruation; if it is for more than ten days, then it is menstruation for ten days and then it is counted as *istihazah*, irregular bleeding during which sex is permitted. (For further details, see my *Ritual Ablutions for Women*.)

The prohibition of sex during the periods is limited strictly to sexual intercourse; other intimate contact (with the exception of the vagina and anus) is allowed. However, it is better not to play with her body between the navel and the knees.

Sexual intercourse is also not allowed during the post-natal bleeding (40 days), during daytime in the month of Ramadhan, and when a person is in *ihram* during the pilgrimage to Mecca. At all other times, sexual intercourse is allowed.

Is it discouraged (*makruh*) to have sex at any time or on any day ?

There are certain *ahadith* which say that sexual intercourse during some days and at some times is *makruh*, but not *haram*.

These days and times are as follows:

- i. during frightful natural occurrences, e.g., eclipse, hurricane, earthquake;
- ii . from sunset till maghrib;
- ii. from dawn till sunrise;
- iii. the last three nights of lunar months;
- iv. eve of the 15th of every lunar month;
- v. eve of 10th Zil-hijjah;
- vii. after becoming junub.

Are there days and times when sexual intercourse is recommended?

Yes we have certain *ahadith* which say that it is better to have sexual intercourse at these times:

- i. Sunday night;
- ii. Monday night;
- iii. Wednesday night;
- iv. Thursday noon;
- v. Thursday night;
- vi. Friday evening;
- vii. whenever the wife wants to have sex.

Thursday and Friday are weekends in the Islamic calendar!

Are there times when it is obligatory (*wajib*) to have sexual intercourse ?

Yes! It is *wajib* on man to have sex with his wife at least once in every four months; this is considered as one of the conjugal rights of the wife. This obligation stays in force unless there is a valid excuse or the wife waives her right.

It is best to have sexual intercourse only **after digestion is completed**. It is said that Ibn 'Umar never had intercourse except after a meal.

Intercourse should be avoided when one is tired, or sad, or disappointed, and also after taking medicine. **It should only be**

indulged in when there is a strong desire, and only when this desire is aroused neither by effort nor by erotic ideas or sights. It should be the result of there being an excess of semen.

Sexual abstinence has resulted in disease more than once. **Intercourse safeguards health**, but excessive intercourse results in tremors [shaking movement of body] and palsies [immobilisation], and weakens the faculties, and dims the eyesight.

"And if they ask you about menstruation, say: 'It is an illness, so let women alone during menstruation, and do not go near them until they are cleansed; and when they have purified themselves, then go into them as Allah has commanded you. Surely Allah loves those who turn to Him, and He loves those who purify themselves'".(Quran: 2.222)

For that blood is decaying blood, and can harm the sexual organ of a man, causing ulceration [and cause great harm in a child born]. The Prophet, said: *"Do anything rather than commit adultery. And whoever has intercourse with a menstruating woman should make compensation of one dinar or half a dinar."*

A Jew, when his wife is menstruating, abstains from all intercourse with her, sets her apart in the house, and makes her eat and drink alone. When the Prophet learned of this, he said, "Except as regards intercourse, do everything differently to the Jews, for the curse of Allah and His anger is on them."

Sexual Intercourse and its obligations:

Foreplay:

Jabir said, the Prophet, forbade the act of making love before caressing."

The Prophet (s.a.w.) also told the men not to leave their wives before they too had been satisfied, as is their right.

Based on this reality, Islam emphasizes on foreplay. Imam 'Ali says, *"When you intend to have sex with your wife, do not rush because the woman (also) has needs (which should be fulfilled)." (Wasa'il, vol. 14, p. 40)* Sex without foreplay has been equated to cruelty. The Prophet said, *"Three people are cruel: a person who has sex with his wife before foreplay."* (Wasa'il, vol. 14, p. 40) Another *hadith* equates sex without foreplay to animal behavior: *"When anyone of you has sex with his wife, then he should not go to them like birds; instead he should be slow and delaying."* (Wasa'il, vol. 14, p. 82) The Prophet said, *"No one among you should have sex with his wife like animals; rather there should be a messenger between them." When asked about the messenger, he said, "It means kissing and talking."* (Tahzibu'l-Ihya, vol. 3, p. 110) Imam Ja'far as-Sadiq has been quoted as follows: *"There should be mutual foreplay between them because it is better for sex."* (Wasa'il, vol. 14, p. 82) The Prophet said: *"Every play of a believer is void except in three cases: horse-riding, archery and mutual foreplay with his wife these are haqq."* (Wasa'il, vol. 14, p. 83)

As far as the basic coital positions are concerned, there are no restrictions.

'Basic coital positions' refer to the positions known as the man above, face to face, woman above face to face; side position, face to face; rear-entry position in which the husband penetrates the vagina from the rear. Actually, the *shari'ah* has left it on the husband and the wife to explore and experiment as they wish.

In the early Islamic period, the people of Medina, influenced by the Jews, used man-above face to face position during sexual intercourse; whereas the Meccans liked to experiment various positions. After the migration of Muslims

to Medina, a Meccan married a Medinan woman and wanted to have sex with her in his own way. The woman refused and said that he can have sex with her only in one position. The case was reported to the Prophet; so Allah revealed the verse saying *"Your women are a tilth for you, so go in to your tilth as you like."* (2:223) [A-Tabataba'i, *al-Mizan*, vol. 3. English translation. p. 319]

However, it is *makruh* to adopt a standing position, or to face the qiblah or keep it on the backside during the intercourse. It is advisable to refrain from the acrobatic positions given by some sexologists of the East and the West which might even cause physical harm. Remember, the basic rule is mutual pleasure and flexibility. If one partner does not like a particular position, then the other should yield to his or her feelings.

Privacy

Book 8, Number 3369: KITAB AL-NIKAH (THE BOOK OF MARRIAGE)

Abu Sa'id al-Khudri (Allah he pleased with him) reported that Allah's Messenger (may peace be upon him) said : The most wicked among the people in the eye of Allah on the Day of judgment is the man who goes to his wife and she comes to him, and then he divulges her secret.

We have quite a few *ahadith* in which the Prophet (SAAS) has emphasized that when you engage in sexual intercourse, make sure that no child (or, for that matter, any other person) sees you or hears you. Abu Basir quotes Imam Ja'far as-Sadiq as follows, *"Be careful not to have sex with your wife while a child can see you. The Prophet used to dislike this (attitude) very strongly."* [Wasa'il, vol. 14, p. 94-95]. If a child sees and hears the parents engaged in sexual intercourse, he might go through a shocking psychological experience. It might also create a problem in his own adult life. The manual quoted

earlier says, *"Most young children are biologically programmed to interpret the sight or sound of adult coition as evidence of a violent assault (they are aware of it earlier than you would expect, so don't keep babies in the bedroom), and the awareness of mother-father sexual relations is on all counts far too explosive a matter to be monkeyed with in the interest of Reichian experiments."*

Islam has laid down clear guide-lines about the privacy of adults. Referring to the children who have not yet reached the age of puberty (*bulugh*), the Qur'an says:

"O you who believe! ... Those of you who have not yet reached puberty should ask you for permission (before entering your bedroom during) three times: before the dawn prayer, when you put off your garments at midday (for siesta), and after the night prayer these are three times of privacy for you. Besides (these three times), there is no blame on you or them if you go to one another (without announcing yourselves). Thus God makes clear to you the signs, and God is All-Knowing, Wise." (24:58)

Then referring to the children who have reached the age of puberty, the Qur'an says: *"When your children reach puberty, they should ask your permission (at all times before entering your bedrooms) just as those who were before them had asked permission. Thus God makes clear to you the signs, and God is All-Knowing, Wise."* (24:59)

Hygiene

Abu Rafi` narrated that the Prophet (s.a.w.) went to his wives' places on one day, one after the other, taking a bath at the place of every one. Abu Rafi` said that he asked: *'O Messenger of Allah! Why don't you make it one bath? The*

Prophet (s.a.w.) said: This is better, more purified, and cleaner. (Abu Dawood and An-Nasa'i).

The husband and the wife are allowed to take a bath together in one place, even if he sees all of her body and she sees all of his body.

`A'ishah said: *I used to take a bath with the Prophet (s.a.w.) from one water container that was between me and him. Our hands used to get mixed in it, and he would put his hands in the water until I say: Leave for me, leave for me. She said: We were both Junub.* (Al-Bukhari and Muslim).

`A'ishah said: *The Prophet (s.a.w.) used to wash his groin area and used to do an ablution (Wudhu') before he ate or slept while being Junub* (status after the intercourse). (Al-Bukhari and Muslim).

The purificatory bath (*ghusl*) is obligatory when:

- (1) sperm or liquid exits from the body whether in a dream or during excitation;
- (2) the two sexual (circumcised) parts meet
- (3) after woman's menstrual period;
- (4) after her postnatal lochia stops or after a child is born in a dry birth.

(The Arabic term *maniya* used in all these rulings refers to both male *sperm and female sexual fluid*. i.e. that which comes from orgasm, and both sexes are intended by the phrase sperm or sexual fluid wherever it appears.)

Other

The man is also prohibited from surprising his wife when coming back from a trip. He should notify her and give her the time to take care of herself, as the Prophet (s.a.w.) and his companions did when they came back from a battle.

The Prophet (s.a.w.) said: *“Do not surprise women at home at night.* (Al-Bukhari)”

Islam and the ways to enhance libido:

The desire to have a better sexual performance and pleasure for both men and women has been a subject of interest for many people over time. Even if this desire gets over-exaggerated in modern times due to sexual licence, fashion, peer pressure, the availability of pornography and sex slaves, and the negative model on movies and commercials, it is a legitimate desire.

Islam stresses the importance of satisfying one's partner sexually but emotional involvement is always more important, and abstinence was practiced by the Prophet (SAAS) and the Sahabas during fasting, celibacy, war campaigns or after an oath.

Muslim Hakims (traditional physicians') have been working on medications for over one thousand years trying to achieve a magic love pill. Now that this "love pill" seemingly has been found, some Muslims want to rip its benefits.

Viagra, which is sold around \$10 per pill in the U.S.A., is being sold at \$100 per pill on the black market in Saudi Arabia. Kuwait recently had allowed the sale at about \$49 per pill officially. The grand religious scholar of Saudi Arabia, Sheikh Baaz has allowed it to be used by men if it does not cause any harm to the body. But it has been prohibited in Iraq. Our prophet (SAAS) himself used "harissa" (sweet meat) in order to strengthen his sexual performance.

Why is Viagra considered dangerous?

Sildenafil (Viagra) relaxes the smooth muscles in the arteries of the male organ allowing an increase in blood flow,

necessary for an erection. It is purely mechanical having no effect on the libido (Prostratecancer.uk p.2).

Reported side-effects include: allergic reactions, breathing difficulties and closing of the throat; swelling of the lips, tongue, face, ankles or legs; hives, chest pain, irregular heartbeat, dizziness and prolonged erections up to four hours which alone can damage the male organ. Viagra is a nitrate, which when taken with nitrate-based medications for heart disease is problematic. Doctors warn that Viagra should not be taken more than once a day. Those with angina, high or low blood pressure, liver or kidney disease, a bleeding disorder, stomach ulcer, an eye condition or deformity of the male organ are forbidden to take Viagra (Directresponse p.1-6).

Natural Alternatives

If sex is important to the marriage, there are many natural alternatives. Medical herbalist Cheri Wagner recommends foods like pomegranate which the Prophet Muhammed (SAAS) also recommended as a blessing on Fridays in addition to figs and dates which all enhance the libido. Also there are herbs like ginseng, palmetto, avocado and carrot oil (Mann p.2). In Malaysia they use a root called Tongkat Ali – ‘Ali’s Cane as a drink but is also available in the form of a pill or a tea bag (Asia p.1-3). Zallouh root from the Middle East is useful for male impotency and female frigidity. Lebanese clinical trials by the Lebanese Society for Urological Studies found 60% – 80% efficiency of the root involving 7,000 volunteers with no side effects. Zallouh increases blood flow to the sexual organs. Drunk as a tea, it will be interesting to see what reports there will be as the US-based Nutranex standardizes the root extract with other ingredients in the form of a capsule (Business p.1. 2).

The essential component of marriage is the relationship itself. The 61-year old woman suing her partner serves as an example. *“And one of His signs is that He created mates for you from yourselves that you may find rest in them, and He put between you love and compassion; most surely there are signs in this for a people who reflect”* (Rum 30: 12). Viagra is not about love and compassion but purely physical needs. This places a risk of increasing promiscuity outside of marriage along with the diseases that can follow, let alone unwanted children. Endocrinologist Dr. Shahid Athar from the Indiana University School of Medicine argues that some Muslims are obsessed with sex not recognizing that Viagra is not a ‘love pill’. Many women complain that they are at the mercy of a ‘Viagra attack’ by their husbands even if they are not in the mood. Dr. Athar advises *that “instead of trying to achieve potency, men should try to achieve love and respect for and from their wives... The human body is a wonderful creation of God, but not a sex machine”* (Athar p.1, 2).”

Extract taken from: islamonline.net

A few more Natural Alternatives

If a person cannot reach orgasm on account of being over-energetic (nervous) and unable to relax, meditative regular exercise such as walking, yoga or tai chi can help. On the contrary, intense workouts have a tendency to decrease libido or to keep it in check. A diet low in sugar, caffeine and other stimulants should be opted for as well as relaxing herbs. **Foods like red meat, sugar, white bread, cheese, eggs, fruits, hot spices, chocolate, pasta, garlic, onions and caffeine can actually increase libido in some people**, as they are all stimulants.

Foods like **salads and raw vegetables, cooked vegetables, barley, brown rice, popcorn, water, bitter and**

sour spices, and condiments (such as vinegar) can reduce an excess libido, increase a low libido, and maintain a healthy one. Thus, if you have a naturally high libido, a vegetarian diet will help you normalize it. Protein and fruits will help those who have a low libido.

Traditional "power foods" that are said to increase libido are: **halva (said to be very effective for women), seaweed, and bee pollen.** Halva is prepared by grinding a cup of sesame seeds and mix in raw honey until it is the consistency of firm dough.

Fava beans (known as 'ful' in the Middle East) are also known to increase sexual desire because of their high dopamine content, says Julian Whitaker, MD, founder of the Whitaker Wellness Center in California. **Fats and oils are big libido decreaseers.**

Herbs that increase libido are especially **damiana and dong quai**, and in lesser strength **hibiscus, licorice, linden, fenugreek, chaste tree, ginger, red clover, star anise and wild yam.**

Herbs that decrease libido in some people are hops, passion flower and valerian

Herbs that help men with problems like **premature ejaculation are ginkgo, hibiscus, sarsaparilla, dandelion, ginseng, saw palmetto, and cloves.** Many of these herbs also balance hormone levels.

Research shows that **sunlight enhances libido.** Libido is thus highest during the summer and lowest during the winter. Would that mean you should move to a hot country?

Effective oils to increase libido are rose, jasmine, vanilla, ginger, pine, ylang-ylang and tonka.

Fertility and libido in some ahadith:

Narrated Qatada: Anas bin Malik said, *"The Prophet used to visit all his wives in a round, during the day and night and they were eleven in number." I asked Anas, "Had the Prophet the strength for it?" Anas replied, "We used to say that the Prophet was given the strength of thirty (men)." And Sa'id said on the authority of Qatada that Anas had told him about nine wives only (not eleven). [Sahih Bukhari. Volume 1, Book 5, Number 268.]*

Narrated Muhammad bin Al-Muntathir: on the authority of his father that he had asked 'Aisha about the saying of Ibn 'Umar (i.e. he did not like to be a Muhrim while the smell of scent was still coming from his body). 'Aisha said, *"I scented Allah's Apostle and he went round (had sexual intercourse with) all his wives, and in the morning he was Muhrim (after taking a bath)." [Sahih Bukhari. Volume 1, Book 5, Number 270.]*

A man once went and complained to the Prophet, that he had very few children. The Prophet told him to **eat eggs.** According to Abu Huraira, the Prophet once complained to the angel Jibril that he could not have sexual intercourse often enough. "What?" replied the angel, *"Why do you not eat harisa? There is the strength of forty men in this dish!"* [harisa is a tasty meatdish]

From Abu Rafi` comes this hadith: I was seated once in the house of the Prophet. He passed his hand over his head and said, 'Make use of henna, the best of all dyes, for henna strengthens the skin and increases sexual energy. Anas, too, said, *"Dye yourself with henna, for surely henna is rejuvenating, and makes a man handsome, and compels him to sexual intercourse."*

Among the ahadith is the one that **shaving the pubic hair stimulates intercourse.** Abu Nu'aim has transmitted this hadith.

Among the foods that are excellent for this purpose are **peas, onions, meat, eggs, cocks and sparrows**. After these a man should drink fresh milk and then rest and say his prayers. Similarly, he should eat **pine kernels, haricot beans, turnips, carrots, grapes, asparagus, and pistachio nuts, hazel nuts and their like**. He should **avoid acidic and salty foods**.

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Questions:

How Much Do You Know About Fertility?

1. When a couple struggles to conceive, what is the most likely explanation?

- a. The woman has a fertility problem
- b. The man has a fertility problem
- c. Each is equally likely to have a fertility problem
- d. They both have fertility problems

2. According to a study in the May 2002 issue of Human Reproduction, at what age does a woman's fertility start to decline?

- a. Late 20s
- b. Early 30s
- c. At 35
- d. Late 30s

3. What can most likely harm the fertility of both women and men?

- a. Smoking
- b. Stress
- c. Drinking a lot of coffee
- d. Being overweight
- e. All of the above

4. Which of these conditions can affect a woman's fertility?

- a. Hypertension
- b. Endometriosis
- c. Food allergies
- d. High blood pressure

5. Which of these signs proves abnormalities in the male sperm?

- a. Sperm is 25 million per milliliter
- b. About 50 percent of the sperm are alive and mobile
- c. The pH of the semen is slightly alkaline
- d. The sperm are clumping together

6. If a doctor cannot help you with your fertility problem, you will never conceive?

- a. True
- b. False

7. Should couples over age 35 seek medical help?

- a. Right away
- b. After three months of trying
- c. After six months of trying
- d. After one year f trying

8. Couples with fertility problems need to undergo complicated, high-tech procedures?

- a. True
- b. False

9. How many days a month does women can become pregnant from vaginal intercourse?

- a. Eight days
- b. Three days
- c. Any time
- d. Fourteen days

10. Men need more sex than women?

- a. True
- b. False.

11. The majority of sexually transmitted infections occur in people under 25.

- a. True
- b. False.

ANSWERS:

1. c. According to the ob-gyn "bible" Clinical Gynecologic Endocrinology and Infertility, both partners have a 40% chance of having a problem. In the rest of the cases, about 10 percent of the time both partners have a fertility problem, and 10 percent of the time the cause is unexplained.

2. a. A woman's fertility starts declining gradually in her late 20s. Most women in their late 20s or early 30s can become pregnant fairly easily, but it might take a month or two longer.

According to the Mayo Clinic, there is only a 15 percent chance that a 45-year-old woman can become pregnant without medical help, but this does not prevent many women from having babies very late.

3. e. Smoking, stress, and extra weight can hamper sperm production or make sperm less mobile.

Drinking five or more cups of coffee a day doubles a pregnant woman's rate of miscarriage, according to a December 2000 study reported in the New England Journal of Medicine. According to the American Society for Reproductive Medicine, stress (and nervousness) does not affect the

reproduction of a woman, however it does affect the regularity of her periods.

4. b. A common causes of female infertility include irregular periods, tubal blockages, pelvic inflammatory disease, thyroid problems, and hormone imbalances. But they are not irreversible conditions.

5. d. Clumping sperm cannot swim up the uterus and find the egg for fertilization to occur. Normal sperm counts range from 20 million to 100 million per milliliter of semen and it is slightly alkaline. One of the ancient means of contraception was to introduce an acidic solution into the vagina. For good fertility, at least 50 percent of the sperm should be alive and moving. Abnormalities are not irreversible and for each disease, a cure.

6. b. According to the Mayo Clinic, about 60 percent of couples with "unexplained" infertility conceive within three to five years on their own.

7.c. Couples under 35 should wait one year, while couples over 35 should seek a medical help after six months, and those over 38 should go a few months after trying. Couples who have problems conceiving often have, for women, a history of irregular periods, pelvic inflammatory disease, endometriosis, or polycystic; for men, a history of undescended testicles, as well as a previous groin injury.

8. b. According to the American Society of Reproductive Medicine, 85 percent to 95 percent of all cases of infertility can be treated with fertility drugs or other therapies and do not require fertilization in vitro.

9.a. A woman is most likely to become pregnant from vaginal intercourse during a total of eight days: up to five days before ovulation, the day of ovulation, and two days following ovulation. Some women (rare) can become pregnant at any tie during their menstrual cycle.

10. b. People have different sexual needs, whether they are men or women. Some women have more sexual needs than some men. Some men have more sexual needs than some women. But it is true that men get arose more quickly then women.

11. a. Many young people do not know enough about how to prevent getting sexually transmitted infections until it is too late.

FERTILITY ISSUES

Helping Fertility:

"Only 50 to 60 percent of all conceptions advance beyond 20 weeks and of pregnancies that are lost, 75 percent represent a failure of implantation," says researcher Susan J. Fisher.

Her research showed that the reason why an embryo can stick to the wall of the uterus is like a key in a lock or a piece of a jigsaw puzzle.

"One piece of the puzzle is a protein on the embryo and the other is a very specialized carbohydrate sugar structure," says Fisher.

She adds: "Currently, fertility clinics can prompt successful pregnancies 25 to 40 percent of the time. By more precisely timing implantation, based on the readiness of the uterus to adhere to the embryo, these chances could improve".

"A lot of women don't use the pill because of the hormonal effects. If you had a drug that went directly to the molecules that control adhesion it would be not only very successful, but also have many less side effects." [www.cbsnews.com]

Science has helped many couples to become fertile and there are still many discoveries that make life possible. Synthesized drugs or surgery, even if acting faster are still harsher on the body.

We tend to forget that a child is a gift from Allaah and that Allaah has put many means of natural reproduction at our disposition. Nature is very resourceful. Otherwise, how could we have multiplied from one couple, first from Adam (AS) and

Hawwa (RA), then from Nuh (AS) and a few of his followers? Prayer is one of the means to ask for children at the example of our prophet Ibrahiim (AS), as well as Zamzam that gives us whatever we drink it for. However, there are many ways to influence our reproduction, some so simple that we do not even think about. Part of Islam teaches us that if we want something, we have to strive for it, and looking for medicines and ways to cure our ailments is certainly one effort that has a reward at the end.

Instead of using synthesized medicines that may have negative sides effects on our health, why not use remedies that are right there under our reach (adopting a healthy lifestyle) and right in our backyards (oils and plants)? Plants or radical changes in lifestyle maybe take much longer to act on our body, but our patience has its own rewards too: physical and spiritual.

How to change one's lifestyle?

Get out of all medication, even out of the counter medications and medicines as common as drugs for flu or headaches. Try to find other solutions or make sure you ask your doctor advice! Women who are trying to get pregnant should avoid drugs known to cause defects in the baby: these include retinoids (Vitamin A drugs often prescribed for acne), warfarin, lithium, danazol, phenytoin, carbamazepine and valproate.

When trying to conceive it is very important to drink lots of water about 8-10 cups a day. This helps to "clean out" your system and helps to increase fertile quality cervical fluid. If you are out of the pill, **Chaste Tree Berry** (*Vitex agnus-castus*) and **Helonious Root** (*False Unicorn or Chamaelirium luteum*) are useful to help women go off birth control pills and normalize their hormones.

Raspberry (*Rubus idaeus*) will strengthen the uterus in preparation for implantation. Other methods for detoxification

would include alterative herbs which help increase elimination, sweating, fasting and juicing.

Eating well is also important for both male and female. Studies showed that **nutrient deficiencies**, even very slight ones, can prevent conception.

Both parents should eat foods full of beta-carotene and folic acid present in bananas, apricots, olives, oily fish, eggs, liver, dark leafy greens such as spinach. Some men and women conceive only by changing their diet. Eat organic fruits and vegetables because they are not treated with chemicals and are not genetically manipulated. Washing and peeling all fruits and vegetables should reduce the problem of pollution.

And reduce highly refined food products like white flour and sugar, which have been shown to suppress the immune system and rob the body of valuable vitamins and minerals.

Fertility Vitamins:

For Males & Females :

- Look for a basic Multi Vitamin Mineral supplement
- Essential Fatty Acid Complex
- Zinc
- Vitamin B6
- Potassium Citrate (source: kelp, fresh and dried fruits, vegetables, rice, wheat bran, potatoes, bananas, orange juice, apricots, unsalted nuts, seeds, grains, mushrooms, molasses, seafood, & the table salt KCL.
- Vitamin E, 1000u.

For Males (increase sperm count and motility) :

- L-Carnitine, 3000 mg daily.
- L-Arginine

- Vitamin C, 1000mg

For Females:

- Co-Enzyme Q10, if previous problems with miscarriage. (CoQ10 is found in all food but is easily destroyed by cooking. Highest sources are rice bran, wheat germ, soy & some beans.)

A supplement plan to be taken 3 months before conception:

Nutrients	Mother	Father
Folic acid	400mcg	-
Zinc	30mg	30mg
Selenium	100mcg	100mcg
Linseed (flaxseed) oil	1000mg	1000mg
Vitamin B6	up to 50mg	up to 50mg
Vitamin B12	up to 50mcg	up to 50mcg
Vitamin E	300-400iu	300-400iu
Vitamin C	1000mg	1000mg
Vitamin A	up to 2300iu	-
Manganese	5mg	5mg
L-arginine	-	1000mg
L-carnitine	-	100mg

*Dietary recommendations from The Foundation of Health:
http://www.marilynglennville.com/foundation_of_health.htm*

Having frequent sexual encounters with the same partner, especially during the fertile period, is of help.

It is known that the sperm counts among males has dropped by 2% a year since the 1980's due to **chemicals** present in our daily environment because not only they affect us directly, but also they end up in our drinking water. A U.S. study showed that women who were infertile or suffered repeated miscarriages had high levels of certain

chemicals found in carpets and upholstery (materials that make a soft covering for a seat).

Avoid cooking in aluminum saucepans, canned foods or painting your walls. All of this influences your fertility as well as your baby's health. Avoid tight underpants that warm up the sperm too much, causing lack of energy among the spermatozooids. We know that the Romans used to take a hot bath before sex as a contraceptive measure.

Remember that the sperm sojourns three months inside the male's body before being allowed leaving the body. During this time, many things can happen. This is where science can help. You can be tested to see what the problem is and if it is your partner or you who is infertile.

It is important to note that one in every six couples of childbearing age have a problem conceiving (no pregnancy after the first year). But over 80% of all infertile couples can be helped to achieve pregnancy with proper medical treatment. This proves that there is nothing wrong with their sex organs, but other physical factors play a role in their infertility. It is recommended to use all natural means before trying conventional medicine or use both alongside for complementarily and after letting your doctor know what plants you are using.

Contrary to what was believed by many, about one third of all infertility cases are due to a male problem! Another third is caused by female problems, and one third by other factors.

Causes for Female Infertility

Polycystic Ovarian Disease: Presence of many minute cysts in the ovaries, by excess production of androgens, and by

infrequent periods (*obliomenorrhoea*) or absence of periods (*amenorrhoea*).

Failure to ovulate (20% of cases) is common due to stress, hormonal imbalances, and various disorders.

Age: After the age of 30 the quality of the eggs begins to diminish, and it becomes harder to become pregnant and carry a fetus to term.

Pelvic inflammation (10% of cases): Blocked or damaged fallopian tubes due to STD, miscarriages, abortions, childbirth, or an intrauterine device.

Uterine Fibroids: It occurs in 40% of women and can interfere with implantation or growth.

Endometriosis (5% of cases): The tissue, which lines the uterus (*endometrium*), grows outside of the uterus.

Prenatal Exposure to Diethylstilbestrol (DES): DES is a synthetic estrogen given to some women who were deemed at risk for miscarriage during the 1950's and 1960's. Women whose mothers took DES while pregnant with them are at high risk for organ disorders.

Pelvic Adhesions: Caused by surgery or infection, it occurs when scar tissue forms between two or more internal organs.

Immunological Infertility: The woman's system produces antisperm antibodies, which destroy her partner's sperm.

Causes for Male Infertility:

Ninety percent of male infertility is caused by the failure to produce enough sperm. *Azospemia* occurs when no sperm is produced while *oligospermia* is diagnosed when few sperm are produced. The causes are diverse:

Infection: known by the presence of anti-sperm antibodies, which attack and destroy the sperm.

Varicocele: A cut in varicose vein causes blood to fall in the testes and augment temperature, destroying sperm. Surgery would repair this.

Obstruction of the duct: Blockage or damage to the spermatid tubes caused by STD, infection, or a congenital abnormality.

Ejaculation: Impotence (no or feeble erection) can be caused by a high fat diet (fatty deposits clog the arteries in the penis), by drugs used to treat high blood pressure, and by the nerve damage caused by diabetes.

Miscellaneous: Problems of the testes (caused by endocrine disorders or inflammation), glands or coital disorders, exposure to diethylstilbestrol (DES) a synthetic estrogen used in the 1950's and 1960's that caused cysts in the male reproductive tract, undescended testicles.

Other factors of male infertility:

Car exhaust is one of the reasons for male infertility (see studies of Dr Michele De Rosa and colleagues at the University of Naples, published in *Human reproduction*) as well as smoking, second hand or not because it reduces sperm counts and impairs sperm motility. It does not seem to affect the female as much.

Temperature: Avoid saunas and hot baths and tight clothing.

Alcohol consumption has been definitively linked to impaired fertility in both men and women. Even if this does not affect Muslims who are prohibited from using alcohol even in perfumery, it affects a majority of people on earth.

Exposure to heavy metals, particularly lead, pesticides, and anesthetic gases has been associated with potential impairments to sperm quality as well as radiation treatments (**Chemotherapy**).

Drug abuse with heroin, amphetamines, cocaine, and PCP has been associated with decreased libido, erectile failure, and ejaculatory problems. Heroin is known to interfere with normal hormonal production, diminished testosterone production in males.

Anabolic steroids used by athletes to increase muscle mass, significantly diminishes sperm counts. Beware! Some over-the-counter supplements may affect negatively people who are having difficulty conceiving and one of them is most likely to be found in every household!

Herbs to avoid in men trying to conceive are:
Cotton (Gossypium Herbaceum) or cottonroot, used in China as a male contraceptive.



Androstenedione that is taken in order to enhance "athletic performance" and increase testosterone levels in the body. Research has shown recently that this product has a lot in common with anabolic steroids.



St. John's Wort



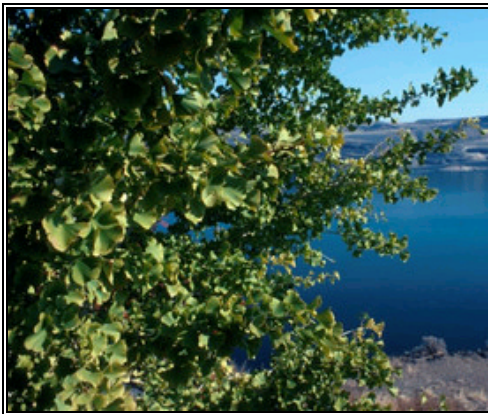
Echinacea

and

Fertility specialist Dr. Richard A. Blackwell (University of Alabama at Birmingham) said in *OBG Management*, a journal for obstetricians and gynecologists:

"It recently has been demonstrated that Echinacea, Ginkgo Biloba and St. John's Wort [used for the relief of mild depressive symptoms] have a negative effect on sperm production and fertilizing capacity."

St. John's wort, echinacea and ginkgo biloba all lessen the ability of sperm to penetrate ova.



Ginkgo biloba



Black Cohosh

and

Dr. Phillip Galle, a Springfield, Illinois fertility specialist, adds: "Ginseng is listed as possibly causing problems. Another one is kava kava [used by Pacific islanders for three thousand years as a relaxing and stress reliever]. And black cohosh is another good one to avoid"



Ginseng flowers + roots,



and Kava Kava

Procardia, a calcium-channel blocker used to treat high blood pressure, is also known to interfere with fertility, Blackwell states: "We've had several men who've come in and they go off the drug and a pregnancy pops up."

Cimetidine (or Tagamet), used to treat stomach ulcers or reflux may contribute to male infertility by causing increased levels of prolactin.

Antibiotics:

Minocycline is toxic to sperm

Nitrofurantoin (*nitrofurantoin*, *furadantin*) decreases sperm count.

Macrolides (*erythromycin*, *troleandomycin*) causes sperm death or motility.

Aminoglycosides (*neomycin*, *gentamicin*) and **Sulfasalazine** reduces count and motility (movement).

What may help impotency?

A study by Qasr al-Aini Teaching Hospital indicates 25%-30% of married men in Egypt suffer from erectile dysfunction [Farag, Fatemah. "ReADY FOR Viagra" 06/13/02. 3. Al-Ahram.org. 08/22/02.].

In the US, 25% of men aged over 50 are also affected with a total of 10-20 million [Mann, Denise. "Natural Alternative to Viagra". Better Nutrition. Findarticles.com. 08/22/02.]

Yohimbe: Yohimbe dilates blood vessels, making this herb useful for treating male impotence, which can be a cause of infertility. A tincture of yohimbe bark is often used in the amount of 5-10 drops three times per day. There are also standardized yohimbe products available for the treatment of impotence. A typical daily amount of yohimbine is 15-30 mg. Patients with kidney disease or peptic ulcer and pregnant or lactating women should not use yohimbe.

Using more than 40 mg of yohimbe per day can cause dangerous side effects, including loss of muscle function, chills, and vertigo and hallucinations.

Foods with high amounts of tyramine (such as cheese, red wine, and liver) should not be eaten while a person is taking yohimbe, as it may cause severe hypertension and other problems.

Damiana: Damiana is more effective when combined with other herbs of similar or complementary activity.

Ginkgo biloba: By increasing arterial blood flow, may help some impotent men.

Asian ginseng: May also be supportive for male potency. Consuming caffeine with ginseng increases the risk of overstimulation and gastrointestinal upset. Persons with uncontrolled high blood pressure should not use ginseng. Long-term use of ginseng may cause menstrual abnormalities

and breast tenderness in some women. Ginseng is not recommended for pregnant or lactating women.

Homeopathic Remedies for Impotence: These remedies can be taken once daily for a week, then once a week for the following month.

Lycopodium 30c: helps when a man is no longer able to achieve an erection.

Argentum nitricum 30c: Works when a man's erection fails when coitus is attempted. This remedy is most useful for men who are anxious, very hurried, very warm-blooded, and have a noticeable craving for sweets and salt.

Selenium metallicum 30c: Good for men who have sexual fantasies but have lost their sexual ability. They are exhausted by even slight effort and lose hair.

Hypericum 6c: helps men who have injuries to areas with high concentrations of nerve endings. It is also effective for easing the pain of puncture wounds and crushing injuries.

This remedy can be taken every hour for up to six times per day, reducing to three to four times per day until symptoms improve.

Some maybe overlooked causes for infertility:

CHEMICALS (poisons)

- **Amalgam:** Amalgam literally means mixed with mercury. Amalgam is the generic term applied to a variety of very similar products used in dentistry to fill teeth. Amalgam is also known as the "silver filling". It is used in tooth filling, especially gold; causes migraine, Alzheimer, loss of memory, genetic damage, chronic fatigue, low immunity, restlessness, etc. Rowland et al reported that women dental assistants with relatively high occupational exposure to mercury vapour were

less fertile than unexposed women controls. But women with low exposure were actually more fertile than the unexposed controls.

1. Rowland AS, Baird DD, Weinberg CR, et al. The effect of occupational exposure to mercury vapour on the fertility of female dental assistants. *Occup Environ Med* 1994;51:28-34.
2. "Amalgam: myths and facts" by Michael J. Wahl, D.D.S.: <http://www.dentalwatch.org/hg/myths208.html>
3. *It's All in Your Head, The Link Between Mercury Amalgams and Illness* by Dr. Hal Higgins
4. Amalgam: <http://www.curezone.com/dental/amalgampage.asp>

- **Aspartame** (Aspartame is the technical name for the brand names, NutraSweet, Equal, Spoonful, and Equal-Measure. It is a product that replaces sugar.

"Aspartame has a profound effect on mood and cognition...depressed mood, anxiety, dizziness, panic attacks, nausea, irritability, impairment of memory and concentration." Ralph Walton, M.D.

James Bowen, M.D., author of *Billions of people are Now Aspartame Victime*, writes: "It ruins female sexual response and induces male sexual dysfunction. Beyond this, aspartame disrupts fetal development by aborting it or inducing defects. And if a live child is born aspartame may have heinously damaged the DNA of the baby cursing future generation." Aspartame account for **over 75% of the adverse reactions to food additives reported to the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA)**. It consists of 40% Aspartic Acid, which can overexcite nerve cells in the brain until they die. 50% Phenylalanine. Excessive amounts of Phenylalanine cause the levels of serotonin in the brain to decrease leading to emotional disorders such as depression. **10% Methanol** (wood alcohol) which can cause blindness, death, DNA damages etc.

Diketopiperazine (DKP) is a by-product of aspartame metabolism and can cause **brain tumors**.

1. "Sperm Warfare: Aspartame vs Fire Ant, The waning energies of human sperm" by James Bowen: <http://www.dorway.com/spermwar.txt>
2. A collection of articles on natural health and the abuses of modern life and drugs on health, plus a collection of books and articles related to Aspartame: <http://www.shirleys-wellness-cafe.com/nutraswt.htm>

- **Cadmium**: manufacturing operations like preparation of fungicides and fertilizers. It can also be released into the atmosphere when garbage containing batteries, **plastic**, paint etc. is burned The highest concentration of Cadmium may appear in fish, shellfish and organs like the liver and kidneys. It can be found in cigarettes, **batteries**, as pigment in **paint**, glazed **pottery or porcelain**, as a **plastic** stabilizer and it is used in photography and in dyes. The "itai-itai" syndrome in Japan was a result of contaminated rice.

Researchers measured blood levels of lead and cadmium in workers exposed to these heavy metals and in smokers. Lead levels were associated with several indicators of lower semen quality, including lower sperm count, less motility (spontaneous movement), and increased structural abnormality. Higher cadmium levels were also linked to a greater percentage of pathologic sperm. Lead and cadmium disrupt the metabolism of zinc, a metal that the body depends on for optimum reproductive function, as well as protein synthesis, tissue repair, and immune function.

This occurs far below levels defined as toxic by the World Health Organization (WHO).

1. Telisman S, Cvitkovic P, Jurasovic J, Pizent A, Gavella M, Rocic B. Semen quality and reproductive endocrine function in relation to biomarkers of lead, cadmium, zinc, and copper in men. *Environmental Health Perspectives* 2000;108:45-53.

2. N.M. Biswas, R. Sen Gupta, A. Chattopadhyay, G. Roy Choudhury, M. Sarkar, Effect of atenolol on cadmium-induced testicular toxicity in male rats, *Reproductive Toxicology* 15 (6) (2001) pp. 699-704.
3. Lloyd S., Jr Jolibois, Matthew E. Burow, Kenneth F. Swan, William J. George, Mary B. Anderson, Michael C. Henson, Effects of cadmium on cell viability, trophoblastic development, and expression of low density lipoprotein receptor transcripts in cultured human placental cells, *Reproductive Toxicology* 13 (6) (1999) pp. 473-480.
4. M. Piasek, M. Blanus, K. Kostial, J.W. Laskey, Placental cadmium and progesterone concentrations in cigarette smokers, *Reproductive Toxicology* 15 (6) (2001) pp. 673-681.

- **Fluoride**: Some industrial companies sell toxic fluorosilicate waste pretending it is the same as naturally-occurring calcium fluoride.

Fluoride is a very strong poison that accumulates in our body.

The Fluoride is **not efficient at all against dental cavities**.

Fluoride has been linked to cancer, osteoporosis, kidney problems, skeletal fluorosis, Alzheimer's disease and mottled teeth.

Consumption of Fluoride during a year or more means irreversible damage on certain parts in our brain that regulates our willpower. It was used as a pacifier of prisoners in the Gulag archipelago in Russia and in prisons in Nazi Germany. Communists had containers with Fluoride in some areas around the world ready to contaminate drinking water at command.

Fluoride goes straight through a common carbon water filter and all other kinds of water filters except filters with reverse osmosis or distillers. It is common in tap water, fruit juice from concentrate, in agriculture.

1. "Poison peril lurking in our tap water" by Martina Watts. Brighton and Hove, Monday 09 June 2003
2. Camargo JA. (2003). Fluoride toxicity to aquatic organisms: a review. *Chemosphere*. 50(3): 251-264.
3. Metcalfe-Smith JL, et al. (2003). Toxicity of aqueous and sediment-associated fluoride to freshwater organisms. *Environmental Toxicology and Chemistry*. 22: 161-166.

4. Fluoride, Quaterly Society for Fluoride Research, online journal: <http://www.fluoride-journal.com/>
5. Fluoride action network: <http://www.fluoridealert.org/>

- **Lithium**: Toxic. It is used to fight against mood swings and depression. May cause harm to the unborn child and harm the breastfeeding babies and risk of impaired fertility is taken in too large doses. But may increase fertility if taken in small doses.

1. Nielsen FH. Ultratrace minerals. In: Shils ME, Olson JA, Shike M, Ross AC, eds. *Modern Nutrition in Health and Disease*. 9th ed. Baltimore, MD: Williams and Wilkins; 1999: 283-303.
2. Pickett EE, O'Dell BL. Evidence for dietary essentiality of lithium in the rat. *Biol Trace Elem Res*. 1992; 34:299-319.
3. Schrauzer GN, Shrestha KP. Lithium in drinking water and the incidence of crimes, suicides and arrests related to drug addictions. *Biol Trace Elem Res*. 1990; 25:105-113.
4. Birch, N.J. ed. *Lithium in medicine*. New Trends in Bio-inorganic Chemistry, ed. Williams, and D. Silva 1978, Academic Press: New York. 389-436.
5. Anke, M., et al, ed. *The biological importance of lithium*. Mengen- und Spurenelemente, 1981, Arbeitstagung: Leipzig. 217-239.

- **Lead**: lead levels in men are associated with lower semen quality, including lower sperm count, less motility (spontaneous movement), and increased structural abnormality. Higher cadmium levels are also linked to a greater percentage of pathologic sperm.

Lead and cadmium disrupt the metabolism of zinc, a metal that the body depends on for optimum reproductive function, as well as protein synthesis, tissue repair, and immune function. This occurs far below levels defined as toxic by the World Health Organization (WHO).

1. Telisman S, Cvitkovic P, Jurasovic J, Pizent A, Gavella M, Rocic B. Semen quality and reproductive endocrine function in relation to

biomarkers of lead, cadmium, zinc, and copper in men. *Environmental Health Perspectives* 2000;108:45-53.

2. Sallmen M, et al. "Paternal exposure to lead and infertility." *Epidemiol. March*,2000;11(2):148-152.

3. Plenge-Bonig A, Karmaus W. "Exposure to toluene in the printing industry is associated with subfecundity in women but not in men." *Occup Environ Med.* 1999;56:443-448.

Gerhard I, et al. "Heavy metals and fertility." *J Toxicol Environ Health.* 1998;54(Part A):593-611.

4. Robins, et al. "Semen quality and fertility of men employed in a South African lead acid battery plant." *Am J Indust Med.* 1997;32:369-376.

5. Paul M. "Occupational reproductive hazards." *Lancet.* May10,1997;349:1385-1388.

6. Hurley D. "Pollutants blamed for steady decline in sperm counts, ejaculate volume." *Med Trib.* 1992;Oct. 8;p. 14.

7. Coste J, et al. "Lead-exposed workman and fertility: a cohort study on 354 subjects." *Eur J Epidemiol.* March,1991;7(2):154-158.

POLLUTANTS

- **Pesticide exposure:** Pesticides can be absorbed through the skin, swallowed or inhaled (most toxic). During application (to kill insects: insecticides; weeds: herbicides; and mold and fungus: fungicides), pesticides drift and settle on ponds, laundry, toys, pools and furniture. People and pets track pesticide residue into the house. Only 5% of pesticides reach target weeds. The rest runs off into water or dissipates in the air. Drift from landscaping ranges from 12 feet to 14.5 miles.

No pesticide is safe!

Increased health risks include: leukemia cancers, spontaneous abortions, genetic damage, decreased fertility, liver and pancreatic damage, disturbances to immune systems, stillbirths and decreased sperm counts.

Consumption of fish contaminated with polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) may reduce the ability of women to conceive.

Herbicides has been found to change the sex of many animals in rivers where they are deversed, so how does it affect male and female sexuality?

1. Buck GM, Mendola P, Vena JE, et al. Paternal Lake Ontario fish consumption and risk of conception delay, New York State Angler Cohort. *Environ Res* 1999;80(2 Pt 2):S13-S18.

2. Padungtod C, et al. "Occupational pesticide exposure and semen quality among chinese workers." *J Occup Environ Med.* October,2000; 42(10): 982-992.

3. Guo YL, et al. "Semen quality after prenatal exposure to polychlorinated biphenyls and dibenzofurans." *Lancet.* October7,2000;356:1240-1241.

4. Cocco PL. "Environmental exposure to p,p'- DDE and human fertility." *Bull Environ Contam Toxicol.* 1997;59:677-680.

5. Smith, et al. "Occupational exposures and risk of female infertility." *J Occup Env Med.* 1997;39:138-147.

6. Burton LL. "Environment and infertility." *Env Health Prospectives.* February,1996;104(2):136-137.

7. "Herbicide use raises fertility questions" by Jason Mc Lure (State Capital bureau) , dec. 02, 2002.

8. "Pesticide Facts" compiled by RATE (Real Alternatives to Toxins in the Environment):

<http://www.chebucto.ns.ca/Environment/RATE/pestfact.html>

- **Cannabis and smoking:** Cannabis, cocaine and anabolic steroids are all known to significantly reduce the sperm count and affect fertility. Cannabis can also interfere with ovulation in women. Smoking is detrimental to a woman's fertility, reducing the chance of pregnancy by as much as 50-70% per cycle. There is also an increased risk of miscarriage in smokers. For men, smoking reduces the average sperm count by around 15%, also affecting the motility of the sperms.

1. Jensen TK, et al. "Adult and prenatal exposures to tobacco smoke as risk indicators of fertility among 430 Danish couples." *Am J Epidemiol.* 1998;148(10):992-997.

2. Merino, et al. "Effects of cigarette smoking on semen characteristics of a population in Mexico." *Arch Androl.* 1998;41:11-15.

3. Vine MF, et al. "Human sperm morphometry and smoking, caffeine, and alcohol consumption." *Reprod Toxicol.* 1997;11(2/3):179-184.
4. Curtis KM, et al. "Effects of cigarette smoking, caffeine consumption, and alcohol intake on fecundability." *Am J Epidemiol.* 1997;146(1):32-41.
5. Vine MF. "Cigarette smoking and semen quality." *Fertility Sterility.* April,1996;65(4):835-842.
6. Alderete BE, et al. "Effect of cigarette smoking and coffee drinking on time to conception" *Epidemiol.* 1995;6:403-408.
7. Sharara, et al. "Cigarette smoking accelerates the development of diminished ovarian reserve as evidenced by the clomiphene citrate challenge test" *Fertility Sterility.* August,1994;62(2):257-262.
8. Chia S-E, et al. "Effect of cadmium and cigarette smoking on human semen quality" *Intl J Fertility.* 1994;39(5):292-298.
9. Rowlands J, et al. "Smoking and decreased fertilization rates in vitro." *Lancet.* December5,1992;340:1409-1410.
10. Fredricsson B, Gilljam H. "Smoking and reproduction: short and long term effects and benefits of smoking cessation." *ACTA Obstet Gynecol. Scand.* 1992;71:580-592.
11. Olsen J. "Cigarette smoking, tea and coffee drinking, and subfecundity." *Am J Epidemiol.* 1991;133(7):734-739.

HORMONES

- **Oral contraceptives:** increase in fertility problems are due to increased exposure to synthetic oestrogens, which upset hormone levels. Synthetic oestrogens are found in drugs such as the Pill and HRT, non-organic dairy produce and meat which often contain hormones, fish from polluted waters, pesticides, plastic containers and cling film. In men, too much oestrogen can lower sperm count. Excess oestrogen in women is associated with conditions such as endometriosis and ovarian cysts which both affect fertility.

1. <http://www.nexusmagazine.com/HormoneHeresy.html>

NUTRITION:

- **Iron:** iron is part of hemoglobin, the oxygen-carrying component of the blood.

Deficiencies in iron make people tire easily in part because their bodies are starved for oxygen. Iron is also part of myoglobin, which helps muscle cells store oxygen.

The most absorbable form of iron, called "heme" iron, is found in oysters (not advisable to eat for pregnant women), meat, poultry, fish.

Non-heme iron is found in dried fruits, molasses, leafy greens.

Acidic foods (tomato) cooked in an iron pan can also be a source of dietary iron.

It is important for pregnancy and post-partum support.

1. Rushton DH, et al. "Ferritin and fertility." *Letter. Lancet.*1991;337:1554.

- **Too little Chromium**

Chromium Picolinate is a trace nutritional supplement, advertised as being effective in controlling appetite and increasing metabolic rate while increasing protein synthesis and retention of muscle. But nobody has proved this claim.

It is vital for carbohydrate metabolism as it potentiates the action of insulin. It normalizes blood sugar levels in subjects with tendencies toward blood sugar fluctuations associated with diabetes (hyperglycaemia) and low blood sugar (hypoglycaemia).

As chromium deficiency has an ability to depress nucleic acid synthesis.

Rodents fed on diets low in chromium have a significantly lower sperm count and decreased fertility. Chromium is also essential for healthy foetal growth and development.

Studies on humans have established that premature infants, and those with evidence of intrauterine growth retardation, have significantly deficiency in chromium.

The deficit in chromium in the modern diet is due to an ever-increasing consumption of refined sugar and white flour. Chromium is discarded in these foods during processing. These foods further exacerbate chromium deficiency because the human body cannot metabolize and transform these highly refined foods into energy without the presence of chromium. The more one consumes these highly refined foods, the more chromium is depleted.

1. Anderson RA and Polansky MM: Dietary chromium deficiency: Effect on sperm count and fertility in rats. *Biol Trace Element Res*, 3:1-5, 1981
2. Hambridge KM: *Newer Trace Elements in Nutrition*. Eds: W Metz and WE Cornatzer p.169, Dekker, New York, 1971
3. Borel JS, Anderson RA: Chromium. In: *Biochemistry of the Essential Ultratrace Elements* (Ed: E Frieden) Plenum Publishing Co., 1984
4. Barnes B and Bradley SG: *Planning for a Healthy Baby: Essential Reading for all Future Parents*. Vermillion, London, UK, 1994
5. Bradley SG and Bennett N: *Preparation for Pregnancy: An Essential Guide*. Argyll Publishing, UK, 1995
6. Hambridge KM: Chromium nutrition in man. *Am J Clin Nutr*, 27:505-514, 1974
- Tolonen M: *Vitamins and Minerals in Health and Nutrition*. Ellis Horwood Ltd, 1990.
7. "The Role of Chromium, Selenium and Copper in Human and Animal Metabolism, A review from the Literature by Tuula E. Tuormaa for FORESIGHT, the Association for the Promotion of Preconceptual Care. First published in the *Journal of Orthomolecular Medicine*, 10 (3 & 4): 149-164, (1995)

- **Too little Folic Acid:** taking 400 micrograms of folic acid per day when becoming pregnant reduces the risk of neural tube disorders such as spina bifida. Folic acid deficiency

reduces fertility in men and may damage the DNA carried by sperm.

1. "Folic Acid Information": http://www.sbaa.org/html/sbaa_folic.html
2. Dawson DW, Sawers AH. "Infertility and folate deficiency. case reports." *Br J Obstet Gynaecol*. August,1982;89:678-680.

- **Too little Vitamin E:** vitamin E deficiency is linked with sterility in men and women because it causes damage to the reproductive tissue.

In a study, infertile couples given vitamin E (200 IU per day for the female and 100 IU per day for the male) showed a significant increase in fertility.

1. Therond P, et al. "Alpha-tocopherol in human spermatozoa and seminal plasma: relationships with motility, antioxidant enzymes and leukocytes." *Mol Hum Reprod*. 1996;2(10):739-744.
2. Geva E, et al. "The effect of antioxidant treatment on human spermatozoa and fertilization rate in an in vitro fertilization program." *Fertil Steril*. September,1996;66(3):430-434.
3. Suleiman SA, et al. "Lipid peroxidation and human sperm motility: protective role of vitamin E." *J Androl*. September/October,1996;17(5):530-537.
4. Long P. "Vitamin E, should you believe in it?, Here's all you need to know" *Hippocrates*. November/December,1994;46-53.
5. Bayer R. "Treatment of infertility with vitamin E." *Intl J Fertil*. January-March,1960;5(1):70-78.

- **Lack of vitamins B2 (Riboflavin) and B6 (Pyridoxine):** are associated with infertility. The B vitamins have many beneficial effects in preconception care and in pregnancy. Deficiencies of all of the B vitamins have been associated with fertility problems, miscarriage, neonatal or perinatal death, foetal abnormalities and low birth weight babies. Supplementation before and during early pregnancy reduces this risk. Supplementation is especially effective during the preconception period and first trimester.

The best sources of **riboflavin** are liver, milk, meat, dark green vegetables, whole grain and enriched cereals, pasta, bread, and mushrooms.

Some reports have indicated that **Vitamin B6** may increase fertility by increasing levels of serotonin and dopamine, two brain chemicals that influence the production of the reproductive hormones FSH and LH. FSH and LH are the biochemical necessary for egg production and release. B6 helps regulate the menstrual cycles, thus encouraging fertility. A 1979 study showed that unexplained infertility could be overcome when women were given between 100 and 900 mg of B6 daily.

The best sources of pyridoxine are whole (but not enriched) grains, cereals, bread, liver, avocados, spinach, green beans, and bananas. Pyridoxine is needed in proportion to the amount of protein consumed.

- **Caffeine:** consumption of more than one cups of coffee per day results in 50% reduction of fertility and is associated with delayed conception in women and increased infertility due to tubal disease or endometriosis.

Caffeine is found in coffee, tea, some soft drinks, chocolate, cocoa, and many over-the-counter pharmaceuticals.

In one study, consumption of three cups of decaffeinated coffee per day was associated with an increased risk of spontaneous abortion.

Some researchers suspect that the tannic acid found in any kind of coffee and black tea may contribute to infertility.

1. Hatch EE, Bracken MB. Association of delayed conception with caffeine consumption. *Am J Epidemiol* 1993;138:1082-92.
2. Stanton CK, Gray RH. Effects of caffeine consumption on delayed conception. *Am J Epidemiol* 1995;142:1322-9.
3. Williams MA, Monson RR, Goldman MG, et al. Coffee and delayed conception. *Lancet* 1990;335:1603 [letter].

4. Grodstein F, Goldman MB, Ryan L, Cramer DW. Relation of female infertility to consumption of caffeinated beverages. *Am J Epidemiol* 1993;137:1353-60.

5. Wilcox A, Weinberg C, Baird D. Caffeinated beverages and decreased fertility. *Lancet* 1988;2:1453-6.

6. Joesoef MR, Beral V, Rolfs RT, et al. Are caffeinated beverages risk factors for delayed conception? *Lancet* 1990;335:136-7.

7. Hakim RB, Gray RH, Zacur H. Alcohol and caffeine consumption and decreased fertility. *Fertil Steril* 1998;70:632-7.

8. Vine MF, et al. "Human sperm morphometry and smoking, caffeine, and alcohol consumption." *Reprod Toxicol*. 1997;11(2/3):179-184.

9. Bolumar, et al. "Caffeine intake and delayed conception: a European multicenter study on infertility and subfecundity." *Am J Epidemiol* 1997;145(4):324-334.

- **Vitamin B12:** Vitamin B12 plays a role in fertility. Intrinsic factor is a substance necessary for the proper absorption of B12. When an aging stomach lining fails to secrete enough intrinsic factor, a B12 deficiency results, causing serious or pernicious anemia. Eventually, this condition can cause infertility in both men and women.

Infertility caused by pernicious anemia was shown to be reversible with vitamin B12 injections.

1. Marty H. *Schweiz Med Wochenschr* 1984;114(5):178-9.
2. Sanfilippo JS, Liu YK. "Vitamin B12 deficiency and infertility: report of a case." *Intl J Fertility*. 1991;36(1):36-38.
3. Gulden KD. "Pernicious anemia, vitiligo, and infertility." *J Am Board Fam Pract*. July-September, 1990;3(3):217-220.

- **Vitamin C:** Vitamin C protects the sperm against the destructive effects of free radicals, which also contribute to the development of many disorders.

Vitamin C supplementation increases sperm count. In one study, two months after 30 infertile but otherwise healthy men began receiving 1 g of the vitamin daily, all of their wives had become pregnant.

Vitamin C protects sperm from oxidative damage. Supplementing vitamin C improves the quality of sperm in smokers. When sperm stick together (a condition called agglutination), fertility is reduced. Vitamin C reduces sperm agglutination, increasing the fertility of men with this condition. Many doctors of natural medicine recommend 1 gram of vitamin C per day for infertile men, particularly those diagnosed with sperm agglutination.

However, high levels of vitamin C can deplete the body of copper, an essential nutrient. It is prudent to ensure adequate copper intake at higher intakes of vitamin C.

1. Dawson EB, et al. *Ann NY Academy of Science* 1987;498:312-23.
2. Dawson EB, et al. "Relationship between ascorbic acid and male fertility." *World Rev Nutr Diet*. 1990;62:1-26.
3. Dawson EB, et al. "Effect of ascorbic acid supplementation on the sperm quality of smokers" *Fertility Sterility*. November,1992;58 (5):1034-1039.
4. Geva E, et al. "Free radicals, antioxidants and human spermatozoa: clinical implications." *Hum Reprod*. June,1998;13(6):1422-1424.
5. Luck MR, et al. "Ascorbic acid and fertility" *Biol Repro*. 1995;52:262-266.
6. Millar, et al. "Vitamin C - the primate fertility factor?" *Med Hypoth*. 1992;38:292-295.
7. Fraga, et al. "Ascorbic acid protects against endogenous oxidative DNA damage in human sperm." *Proc Nat Acad Sci*. December,1991;88:11003-11006.

- **Zinc deficiency:** Of all the nutrients associated with fertility, zinc is probably the most important. This mineral is vital for hundreds of enzyme systems, many of which affect sexual performance and fertility in men and women. It is necessary for the growth and development of the embryo, and it is needed for sperm production in men. A very large percentage of couples who fail to conceive or experience miscarriages are found to be short of zinc. Stress, smoking, pollution and alcohol deplete body levels of zinc.

Zinc levels in the seminal plasma (the fluid in which the sperm exist) are directly related to sperm mobility, and dietary zinc restriction reduces both sperm count and seminal plasma volume.

A lack of zinc can reduce testosterone levels. For men with low testosterone levels, zinc supplementation raises testosterone and also increases fertility. For men with low semen zinc levels, zinc supplements may increase both sperm counts and fertility. Most studies have infertile men take zinc supplements for at least several months. The ideal amount of supplemental zinc remains unknown, but some doctors of natural medicine recommend 25 mg three times per day.

Individuals who take 30 mg or more of zinc per day for more than a few months **should balance the zinc with copper** in order to prevent copper deficiency. For 30 mg per day of zinc, 2 mg per day of copper is usually taken. For 60-90 mg per day of zinc, 3-4 mg per day of copper is a reasonable amount. Zinc intake in excess of 300 mg per day may impair immune function.

Zinc competes for absorption with iron, calcium, and magnesium. A multimineral supplement will prevent mineral imbalances that can result from taking high doses of zinc for extended periods of time.

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2. Mohan H, et al. "Inter-relationship of zinc levels in serum and semen in oligospermic infertile patients and fertile males." *Indian J Pathol Microbiol*. October,1997;40(4):451-455.
3. Bedwal. R. "Zinc, copper and selenium in reproduction." *Experientia*. July,1994;50:626-640.
4. Jameson S. "Zinc status in pregnancy: the effect of zinc therapy on perinatal mortality, prematurity, and placental ablation." *J NY Acad Sci*. 1993;1-15.

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6. Hunt CD, et al. "Effects of dietary zinc depletion on seminal volume and zinc loss, serum testosterone concentrations and sperm morphology in young men." *Am Clin Nutr.* 1992;56:148-157.
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- **Calcium:** Calcium helps reduce the symptoms of PMS (Pre Menstrual Symptoms), aiding fertility. A dose of 300-milligram calcium tablets each day would reduce symptoms for half of the woman population affected, says *American Journal of Obstetrics and Gynecology*, Vol 179 #2 1998; *Health*, Sept-Oct 1998.

1. Wai Yee Wong, Gert Flik, Pascal M.W. Groenen, Dorine W. Swinkels, Chris M.G. Thomas, Jenny H.J. Copius-Peereboom, Hans M.W.M. Merkus, Régine P.M. Steegers-Theunissen, The impact of calcium, magnesium, zinc, and copper in blood and seminal plasma on semen parameters in men, *Reproductive Toxicology* 15 (2) (2001) pp. 131-136.

- **Too little Selenium:** It is a trace element. It is a vital element for growth and for maintaining optimum fertility. Low dietary selenium would be linked with the development of cancer and cardiovascular disorders.

Selenium deficiency results in impaired reproductive performance. It is vital for maintaining the integrity of sperm mitochondria.

Deficiency leads to a reduced testicular growth and sperm immotility.

Since selenium is not essential for plant growth, the level of selenium in foods of plant origin depends on the soil conditions under which they are grown.

Acid rain tends to wash any remaining traces of selenium out of the soil. Not only is the meat we eat low in selenium but also products such as eggs and milk

Food processing further depletes selenium from our stable diet. For example, brown rice has fifteen times the selenium content of white rice. Whereas whole-wheat flour contains twice as much of this vital trace element compared with the white variety.

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3. McConnell KP, Burton RM: Selenium in spermatogenesis. In: *second International Symposium on Selenium in Biology and Medicine* (Eds: JL Martin and JE Spallholz), Westport, Connecticut: AVI Publishing, 1981
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- **Lead:** an excessive lead accumulation in children is known to cause hyperactivity, a reduced intelligence and anti-social behaviour. In adults, it is associated with heart disease, cancer

and infertility. Also, with criminality. In addition, a high maternal lead is known to lead to miscarriage, a reduced birth weight and a number of foetal malformations.

The same with high aluminium, mercury and an excess of copper. All heavy metals, even at relatively low concentrations, have a significantly negative effect on fertility and pregnancy outcome.

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4. Bradley SG and Bennett N: *Preparation for Pregnancy: An Essential Guide*. Argyll Publishing, UK, 1995

- **Iron**

1. Rushton DH, et al. "Ferritin and fertility." *Letter. Lancet*.1991;337:1554.

- **Copper**

1. Wikse SE, et al. "Diagnosis of copper deficiency in cattle." *J Am Veterinary Med Assoc*. June1,1992;200(11):1625-1629.
2. Jockenhovel EN, et al. "Seminal lead and copper in fertile and infertile men." *Andrologia*. 1990;22:503-511.
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OVERWEIGHT

- **Excessively underweight or overweight:** About one-third of the U.S. population is overweight. One in five people are obese! And the rate is rising by over 5% per year. Excess body weight is implicated in many different disorders: heart disease, diabetes, cancers, prostate enlargement, female infertility, uterine fibroids, and gallstones.

During pregnancy, being overweight is a risk factor for gestational diabetes, preeclampsia, gestational hypertension, and various other disorders.

1. Hauenschild A, et al. "Diet." *Gynakologe*. 2000;33:11-17.
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3. Wynn M, Wynn A. "The need for nutritional assessment in the treatment of the infertile patient." *J Nutr Med*. 1990;1:315-24.
4. Green BB, et al. "Risk of ovulatory infertility in relation to body weight." *Fertil Steril*. 1988;50(9):621-26.

OTHER

- **Melatonin:** the hormone which is released in response to light and day length (melatonin) does have an effect on the release of other hormones, including oestrogen. So cycle regulation according to the amount of light is not a surprise. Increasing darkness during the winter months triggers higher levels of melatonin in animals, which are believed to play a role in inhibiting fertility.

The same substance is believed to exert a potentially significant influence on sperm production in men.

1. Male Infertility and Melatonin:
<http://www.gsd.com/assessments/finddisease/infertilitym/melatonin.html>

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3. Malpoux B, et al. "Biology of mammalian photoperiodism and the critical role of the pineal gland and melatonin." *J of Bio Rhyt*.2001; 16:336.
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8. Kennaway DJ, Hugel HM. Mechanisms of action of melatonin within the central nervous system. *Anim Reprod Sci*.1992; 30:45.

- L-Carnitine: A substance made in the body and also found in supplements. It appears to be necessary for normal functioning of sperm cells. Supplementing with 3 grams per day for four months has helped to normalize sperm in men with low sperm quality in several studies

1. Vitali G, et al. "Carnitine supplementation in human idiopathic asthenospermia: clinical results." *Drugs Exp Clin Res*. 1995;21(4):157-159.
2. Micic SR, et al. "Seminal carnitine and glucosidase in oligospermic and azospermic men" *J Androl*. 1994;15:77(Suppl.).
3. Costa M, et al. "L-carnitine in idiopathic asthenozoospermia: a multi-center study" *Andrologia*. 1994;26:155-159.
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- Too little Arginine: This is an amino acid found in many foods. Supplementation with the amino acid L-arginine (16 grams per day), has been shown to improve fertilization rates in women with a previous history of failed attempts at *in vitro* (test tube) fertilization.

This element has several roles in the body: it helps healing wounds, removing excess ammonia from the body, stimulating

immune functions, and promoting secretion of several hormones, including glucagon, insulin, and growth hormone. It is a testosterone precursor and is necessary if a man is to maintain a normal sperm count. Dosage must be adequate. It is also important for sperm mobility.

However, some studies have reported that arginine helps few, if any, infertile men. Nonetheless, many doctors of natural medicine suggest 4 grams of arginine per day for several months to see if it will help infertile men.

Individuals with kidney or liver disease should be careful before using it.

Individuals with herpes (either cold sores or genital herpes) should not take arginine, because it can stimulate replication of the virus.

1. Battaglia C, Salvatori M, Maxia N, et al. Adjuvant L-arginine treatment for in-vitro fertilization in poor responder patients. *Hum Reprod* 1999;14:1690-7.
2. Mendez JD, et al. "Effect of L-arginine and polyamines on sperm motility." *Ginecol Obstet Mex*. August, 1993;61:229-234.
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4. De Aloysio D, et al. "The clinical use of arginine aspartate in male infertility." *Acta Eur Fertil*. 1982;13(3):133-67.

- Glutathione

1. Irvine DS. "Glutathione as a treatment for male infertility." *Rev Reprod*. January 1996;1(1):6-12.
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- Coenzyme Q10: This is a nutrient used by the body in the production of energy. While its exact role in the formation of sperm is unknown, there is evidence that as little as 10 mg per day (over a two-week period) will increase sperm count and motility.

1. Ochsendorf, et al. "Glutathione in spermatozoa and seminal plasma of infertile men." *Hum Repro.* 1998;13(2):353-359.
2. Alleva R, et al. "The protective role of ubiquinol-10 against formation of lipid hydroperoxides in human seminal fluid." *Molec Aspects Med.* 1997; 18(Suppl.):S221-S228.
3. Lewin A, Lavon H. "The effect of coenzyme Q10 on sperm motility and function." *Molec Aspects Med.* 1997; 18(Suppl.):S213-S219.
4. Mancini A, et al. "Coenzyme Q10 concentrations in normal and pathological human seminal fluid." *J Androl.* November-December, 1994;15(6):591-594.

- S-Adenosyl-L-Methionine (SAM): Preliminary research suggests oral SAM may increase sperm activity in infertile men.

SAM is normally produced in the liver from the amino acid methionine, which is abundant in most diets. Folic acid and vitamin B12 are necessary for the synthesis of SAM, and deficiencies of these vitamins results in low concentrations of SAM in the central nervous system.

Researchers treating people with manic-depression (bipolar illness) have reported that SAM could cause them to switch from depression to a manic episode. SAM has been used in a study of pregnant women and was found to be safe.

1. Piacentino R, et al. "Preliminary study on the use of s. adenosil methionine in male sterility." *Minerva Ginecol.* 1991;43(4):191-193.

- PABA: Some previously infertile women have become pregnant after supplementing with PABA (para-aminobenzoic acid), 100 mg four times per day. PABA is believed to increase the ability of estrogen to facilitate fertility.

The most well-known property of PABA is as an effective sunscreen, when used topically.

One research published in 1942 reported that a dozen of infertile women were able to conceive after supplementing

with 100 mg of PABA taken four times per day for three to seven months.

1. Sieve BF. The clinical effects of a new B-complex factor, para-aminobenzoic acid, on pigmentation and fertility. *South Med Surg* 1942;104:135-9.

- Prolonged exposure to heat

Hot baths has been used as a means of contraception since antiquity. Fertility can be impaired by heat stroke, tight underwear, hot baths, or work conditions requiring extended periods of sitting, extended travel, or work in the heat (see details to come).

Damage to sperm quality has also been described following long-term exposure to microwaves. Heat Active production of sperm requires a temperature about 3-4°C lower than normal body temperature. Decreased sperm count has been noted in pathologies such as varicocele and cryptorchidism, as well as in cases of prolonged sauna exposure and in paralyzed patients restricted to wheelchairs.

Impairment of spermatogenesis has been found in chronic occupational exposure to high temperatures. Problems in spermatogenesis has been proven among professional drivers, who are exposed to the products of fuel consumption, noise, vibration, emotional stress, physical load on the pelvic organs, and increased temperature in the pelvis because of prolonged sitting. The same occurred among welders, who are exposed to heat, solvents, heavy metals and noise.

1. Thonneau P, et al. "Occupational heat exposure and male fertility: a review." *Hum Reprod.* 1998;13(8):2122-2125.
2. Thonneau P, et al. "Heat exposure as a hazard to male fertility." *Lancet.* January 20, 1996;347:204-205.
3. "Chronic occupational exposure to high temperatures" by Sheiner, Hammel, Potashnik and Carel. September 17, 2002.

- **Pernicious Anemia:** it was found that as many as 10 percent to 15 percent of adults older than 65 have a vitamin B-12 (also called cyanocobalamin or cobalmin) deficiency called pernicious anemia. It leads to primary ovarian failure and impotency. Pernicious anemia is most common in people of Celtic (i.e., English, Irish, Scottish) or Scandinavian descent and more likely attacks people over 40. Vitamin B-12 is found in meat, poultry, fish, eggs.

1. Gulden KD. "Pernicious Anemia, Vitiligo, and Infertility." J Am Board Fam Pract. July-September 1990;3(3):217-220.
2. Marty H. "Pernicious anemia as a cause of secondary sterility." Schweiz Med Wschr. 1984;114(5):178-179.

- **Thyroid:** Either an overactive or underactive thyroid gland can interfere with both male and female fertility. However, this can be corrected by taking thyroid replacement hormone.

1. Bohnet HG, et al. "Subclinical hypothyroidism and infertility." Lancet. 1981;2:1278.
2. Horne HW. "Protein-bound iodine and reflex speed measurements in infertile patients." Int J Fertil. 1963;8:503-06.
3. Faulknew JW. "Use of liothyronine to improve sperm counts after surgical correction of sterility." J Urol. 1962;88:262-65.
4. Farris EJ, Colton SW. "Effects of L-thyroxine and liothyronine on spermatogenesis." J Urol. 1958;79:863-67.
5. Horrax TM. "Liothyronine in the treatment of male infertility." J Urol. 1958;80:49-54.
6. Reed DC, et al. "Male subfertility: treatment with liothyronine (Cytomel)." J Urol. 1958;79:868-72.
7. Kupperman HS, et al. "Endocrine therapy of sterility." Am Pract Dig Treat. 1958;9:547-63.
8. Buxton CL, Herrmann WL. "Effect of thyroid therapy on menstrual disorders." JAMA. 1954;155:1035-39.



Aromatherapy:

A lot of natural treatments are available to the infertile couple. One of them is aromatherapy.

The use of aromas for medicinal, spiritual and magical purposes existed as far as the ancient Egyptians in 3,000 BC, and perhaps even farther back to 5,000 BC as indicated by the Tassili cave paintings representing women wearing fragrant flower garlands.

Linked to reproduction, there are some Aroma used as aphrodisiac. The Kama Sutra suggests anointing the body with Blue Lotus and Jasmine oil. Ancient Egyptians used Frankincense. Ancient Indians used Sandalwood and Jasmine. Cleopatra herself was said to use incense.

Aromatherapy is still used in order to treat infections, and problems with menstruation, childbirth and pregnancy. The Roman historian Pliny, author of the 1st Century AD's Natural History mentions 32 remedies prepared from Rose, 21 from Lily, 17 from Violet and 25 from Pennyroyal. Susinon, which served as a woman's anti-inflammatory tonic and Amarakinon were used to encourage menstruation.

Ancient Indians used Sandalwood for genito-urinary infections. Even Nostradamus suggests Rosewater during the first and last months of pregnancy.

Other famous herbalists suggest other methods: Nicholas Culpepper, 1652, Rycharde Banckes, 1525, Li Shih-Chen, 1578 and Joseph Miller, 1722.

All the aromatherapy products can be used as massage (mixed with a base) or in the bath, but they should never be taken orally, and if they are pure oil, they should be blended into oil.


Never use essential oils directly on the skin!

They can also be inhaled by wetting a cotton ball with the oil.

References:

1. Kava, the Miracle Antianxiety Herb, by Ray Sahelian, M.D., published by St. Martin's press, N.Y.
2. Kava, the Ultimate Guide to Nature's Anti-stress Herb, by Maggie Greenwood-Robinson, Ph. D, published by Dell Publishing, N.Y., 1999. Note! Kava may be linked to liver damage!
3. The Natural Pharmacist: [http:// www.tnp.com](http://www.tnp.com).
4. A great site for chemical constituents and actions of medicinal plants: Jim Dukes: <http://www.ars-grin.gov/duke/>
5. The Botanical Safety Handbook, Editors include Michael McGuffin, Christopher Hobbs, Roy Upton, Alicia Goldberg, and Daniel Gagnon. The American Herbal Products Association.
6. "Male Life Factors" by Anna Peris, PharmD.
7. <http://www.fertilitext.org/>
8. http://www.altpenis.com/penis_news/fertility_article_index.shtml

Some essential oils that help fertility by balancing the hormonal system

Essential Oil	Actions	Images	Plant samples
<p>Myrrh (<i>Commiphora myrrha</i>)</p> <p>=====</p> <p>Smell: <u>sharp, balsamic</u></p> <p>Blossoms: <u>small, white</u></p> <p>Leaves: <u>few</u></p> <p>roots: <u>The tree has light bark and knotted branches</u></p> <p>Other: <u>It is a small tree that can grow to 16 feet (5m.) It is found in Somalia, Arabia and Yemen. The oil is made from the gum resin from the trunk.</u></p>	<p>uterine discharges =====</p> <p>It was used in the ancient Egypt for embalming. It has a preservative effect that helps against the spread of gangrene.</p> <p>It has an antifungal quality that makes it a good product in many skin, gum and bronchial disorders.</p> <p>It is good for mouth and gum disorders.</p> <p>It is of a great help incase of scanty periods, leucorrhea, thrush and amenorrhea.</p>		<p><i>I used it and</i></p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p>

Samples (plant, incense or oil):
You can stick an envelope or a plastic bag here, and close samples in it.

Although no Androgen (male hormones) or Progesterone-like activity has been found so far in Essential Oils, there have been reports of Estrogenic activity. The phyto-estrogens (or isoflavones) that are present in many plants, such as soybeans or clover, help with women hormonal problems because they have a variety of mild estrogens actions on the body. Estrogens are responsible for secondary sex characteristics such as enlargement of the reproductive organs, development of the breasts, appearance of pubic hair, increased deposits of fat beneath the skin, widening and lightening of the pelvis and the onset of the menses. It is present in many plants that facilitate fertility.

Progesterone maintains the pregnancy, and prepares the breasts for milk production. Progesterone stops the other ovary from making a second egg when there is ovulation. That's why women who birth naturally have single births and only one out of 300 months (i.e., every 25 years) do the ovary ovulate two eggs at the same time, resulting in fraternal twins! Sarsaparilla beans for instance produce phyto-progesterone, a substance which provide the body with progesterone-like benefits. If there is an overproduction of progesterone, it can cause cramping, emotional stress, nausea, and other signs. The hormone production is linked to cancers including breast cancer and endometriosis (abnormal growth of the uterine wall).

Learning about the chemical constituents of essential oils enables practitioners to apply them to very specific problems, since menstrual disorders, PMS (pre-menstrual symptoms), and menopausal problems are known to be caused generally by an underproduction of estrogen and an overproduction of progesterone.

Here are some other remedies that can be used in women's sexual problems:

PMS Treatments: Specific symptoms include swelling breasts, irritability, and water retention:

Massage: Rose Geranium (for swelling), Peppermint (for swelling) and Fennel (hormonal) for breasts, belly, and small of back.

Diffusor: Rose Geranium (irritability)

Diet: No stimulants, plenty of Peppermint (irritability) tea with Star Anise (hormonal)

Menstral Regulation: for unreliable cycle

Massage: Rose Otto (indicated for scanty or irregular menses) and Fennel (hormonal) on belly and small of back

Diffusor: Rose Otto (indicated for scanty or irregular menses) and Fennel (hormonal)

Diet: No stimulants, Tea with Peppermint (to reduce stress) and Star Anise (hormonal)

Menopause: hot flashes, nausea, dry vagina

Massage: Rose Otto and Fennel (hormonal) on belly and small of back and breasts

Diffusor: Rose Otto and Fennel (hormonal)

Diet: Fennel and Star Anise tea (hormonal)

Spritz: Peppermint and lemon oils for cooling hot flashes

Pregnancy: stretch marks, nausea

Massage: belly, thighs and breasts and vagina daily with cocoa butter, jasmine and carnation

Diffusor: Peppermint and Rose Otto for de-stressing

Spritz with Peppermint and Rose or Lemon oils for cooling.

References:

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6. Tisserand, Robert: The Art of Aromatherapy. Healing Arts Press, Vermont, 1977
7. The Complete Kama Sutra, trans. Alain Daniélou, Park Street Press, Rochester Vt., 1994
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9. Online Article: "Extreme Frigidity" in The Aromatherapy Global Online Research Archives
10. Article: "Hormones and Health" by Tony Balacs, in The Aromatherapy Home Studies Course by Jeanne Rose, Chapter 12.
11. Online Article "The History of Aromatherapy" by Kathi Keville and Mindy Green Excepted from Aromatherapy: A Complete Guide to the Healing Art, Crossing Press 1995
12. Internet: <http://www.nature-helps.com/>

Plants that promote fertility:



The use of herbs as a source of medical treatment is the most traditional way of battling against infertility. It was not until recently that herbal remedies have been replaced by synthetic medication. Most doctors do not trust what we call

“unconventional medicine” while it was prescribed by our Prophet (SAAS) and successfully used for millenniums.

Black Seed is a widely used herb by Muslims, and one of the favorites of Prophet Muhammad (SAAS).

Abu Hurayra reported that the prophet (SAAS) said: “Use the Black Seed as it is the panacea that heals all harms except death.” (Muslim, Bukhari).

According to Ibn Qayyim al Jawziyya the Black Seed was used in several forms to:

Eliminate flatulence, extracts the helminths (worms), palliates leprosy, **provoke menstrual flow** and increases milk production

Fenugreek was also widely used during the time of Prophet Muhammad (SAAS).

The Prophet (SAAS) said: “Resort to the cure of the Fenugreek” and He (SAAS) approved of Al Harth ibn Kalda using it to treat Sa'd Ibn Waqqas.

According to Ibn Qayyim al Jawziyya, Fenugreek was used in several forms to:

Soothe coughs, **increase semen**, soothes asthma, **provoke menstruation**, decompose the tumor in the spleen. Also recommended to women to soak in a bath with to soothe aches related to a tumid (distended by fluids) womb.

The use of herbs is not to be taken as the be all to end all for infertility treatment. There are many causes for infertility that may be successfully medically treated. Herbs as well as vitamins, proper diet and exercise along with conventional medical treatment can all be used in complementarily. As with any other forms of medication you should consult professional advice and guidance before taking any herb because they can have a strong impact on your health.

Just because a product says it is natural does not mean it is safe!

Endometriosis:

For some women, chronic endometriosis is associated with being overweight or obesity. Lose weight by restraining your intake calories and exercises (all other remedies just do not work!) and your endometriosis may clear up on its own. Many time endometriosis clears when pregnancy occurs. If you can get pregnant it may clear up on its own.

The following herbs have been traditionally used for Endometriosis; some are contraindicated while pregnant: Sheperd's Purse (*Capsella burse-pastoris*); Juniper Berry (*Juniperus communis*); White Peony root (*Paeonia albiflora*) Chinese Rhubarb/Turkey Rhubarb (*Rheum tanguticum*, *R.officinale*, *R. palmatum*); Dan Shen, Red Root Sage (*Salvia miltiorrhiza*); Huang Qin, Chinese Scullcap root, Scute root (*Scutellaria bicalensis*); Processed Rehmannia (*Rehmannia glutinosa*); Teasel root (*Dipsacus japonicus*); Aletris, Unicorn Root, Star Grass (*Aletris farinosa*); Pipsissewa (*Chimaphila umbelata*); Artichoke (*Cynara scolymus*); Chaste Tree (*Vitex agnus-castus*).

Blue Cohosh, Celery Seed, Wild Ginger and Wild Carrot are contraindicated with Endometriosis.

Herbs for ovulation problems:

Nu Zhen zi, Shiny Privet, Ligustrum fruit (*Ligustrum lucidum*) Blue Cohosh (*Caulophyllum thalictroides*), to be used in small amounts.

Helonia Root, False Unicorn (*Chamaelirium leuteum*), in conjunction with Chaste Tree is good for women coming off birth control pills because they normalize hormones.

Improving Fertility:

FOR WOMEN:

Helonia Root, False Unicorn (*Chamaelirium leuteum*) helps with hormonal imbalances; it is good used with licorice, Dong quai, Shatavari.

This combination is also good for women coming off of Birth Control or Fertility Drugs because they help normalize the reproduction system.

To build blood and increase **libido** use:

Bu qu zhi (*Psoralea corylifolia*) and Shatavari.

To build your blood, strength and stamina, use Horsetail, Alfalfa, Nettle leaf and a small amount of Yellow dock.

You can use them as tea or over your food in their herbal form.

For the **anxiety, stress, depression** that can have a great impact on fertility, use Chaste Tree, Blue Vervain, Motherwort.

To **build and strengthen your body** for, during and after pregnancy, use Raspberry Leaf. It prepares the uterus to receive the egg. Later, it will maintain the muscle tone of the uterus as it is stretched by the growing fetus. After the birth, it will help reduce the uterus back to its pre-pregnancy size.

Women with history of miscarriages should use uterine tonifying herbs for 3 - 6 months before conception. This includes:

Raspberry leaf; Lady's mantle; Partridge berry.

Once pregnant discontinue herbs, except for Raspberry.

FOR MEN:

To increase Sex drive: Humulus; Scutellaria; Horny Goat Weed, short-term use is good (2 weeks); long-term burns the kidneys. It is used for impotence, frequent urination, pre-ejaculation, low back pain, pain in knees, male infertility, cold

in the kidneys, popular TCM herb for men who need help keeping it up.

To increase sperm Motility: Avena, Capsicum, Humulus, Cimicifuga, Salix, Thuja.

To improve sperm count and motility as well as **increase libido:** Dong Chong Xia Cao, Summer Grass and Winter Worm (Cordiceps sinensis); He shou wu, Fo ti (Polygonum multiflorum); Yin yan huo, lustful sheep and goat plant (Epimidium macranthum), to be use short term; Ashwaganda (Withania somnifera) helps relieve stress and overload. Wu wei zu, 5 flavor fruit, Schisandra berry (Schisandra chinensis) to normalize hormone function and energize.

Kidney yang tonics (for same results):

Morinda root, Bai ki tien; Ashwaganda; Plantain seed; Dodder seed; Saw palmetto; Sao yang, cistanches; Ru cong rong; Cordiceps

For **testosterone hormonal problems:** Red Ginseng.

For **deficient blood:** He shou wu.

Herbs that regulate female hormonal system:

Many herbs demonstrate a strong influence over the endocrine system, helping women regulate erratic hormone surges. Some of the most used herbs for fertility are the “weeds” growing in your backyard. At the same time, they are nourishing herbs, rich in vitamins, minerals, and trace elements.

Here are some more herbs that are known to increase fertility by regulating women cycles. Note that these herbs should be under the supervision of a herbalist because some of these herbs may be better for you or bad for you depending on your individual symptoms.

References:

1. Susun Weed’s herbal remedies for women:

<http://www.susunweed.com>

Wise Woman Herbal for the Childbearing Year by Susun S. Weed.

ISBN:09614620-0-0

Healing Wise by Susun S. Weed. ISBN: 09614620-2-7

New Menopausal Years the Wise Woman Way by Susun S. Weed. ISBN:

1888123036

2. Ask questions and get answers from a qualified herbalist David Brill of The Rosemary House:

<http://www.herbnet.com/>

Herbs that encourage Fertility (female)

Red Clover – To make ready your body for pregnancy and increase fertility. Use it once or twice a day as a tea. Three to six capsules a day.

Dong Quai – helps women who are having problems with menstrual cycles and can't get pregnant. It strengthens the female organs, and is the female counterpart to ginseng, which you do not want to use here. Stop using Dong Quai if pregnancy occurs.

Wild Yam Root (by Solaray)– For women who have an history of miscarriage. It replaces progesterone suppositories to increase the chances of keeping the baby. Take 2 to 3 capsules a day when you know you are pregnant, and increase the dosage to 8 or 9 a day when you approach the 8th or 9th weeks gestation.

Black Cohosh - is used in female gland toning compounds for PMS, menstrual problems and menopausal symptoms. it helps increase fertility by regulating hormone production, especially after discontinuing the birth control pill.

Selenium - deficiencies may reduce sperm counts: linked to sterility in men and infertility in women.

Vitamin C - aids sperm production; prevents sperm from clumping and makes them more motile.

Vitamin E - helps balance hormone production: called the "sex hormone" as it carries oxygen to the sex organs.

Zinc - regulates function of reproductive organs

Other Herbs - These have been mentioned to promote fertility as immunomodulators: Motherwort, Skullcap, Pasque flower, Shiitake and Reishi Mushrooms, Sarsaparilla Root/

Herbs that encourage Fertility (male)



Vitamin A given in excess doses decreases sperm production, actually shrinking testicular tissue, reducing sperm counts as well skeletal immobility and lameness.

=====

L-Arginine is important for protein synthesis and the functioning of the urea cycle. Without it, sexual arousal, drive and erections are blunted.

Vitamin E is an antioxidant that plays important roles in male sperm production. Lack of vitamin E inhibits the formation of sperm, induce a decline in the formation of key sex hormones and enzymes responsible for sperm production.

Zinc. Zinc is involved in the activation of key sperm enzymes, and moves into the prostate with the assistance of testosterone. A lack of zinc causes a lowering of testosterone, shrinks testicle size and produces misshapen and less healthy sperm.

Tribulus (*tribulus terrestris* or *Bulgarian Tribulus*): The most powerful male fertility herb is derived from a plant called Tribulus, also known as tribulation (the crown of thorns). Highly popular in bodybuilding, it increases stamina, helps generate greater muscle size and tone, reduces water retention and lowers cholesterol.

It restores sex drive (libido) and fertility in both male and female. This herb treats sexual dysfunction, infertility and even impotence. Actually, it has been found to regulate hormone levels in both men and women. The result is increased sexual potency in men and improved hormonal balance in women. Studies indicate that men who take tribulus terrestris consistently have higher amounts of free testosterone in their systems.

It also has beneficial effects on immunity.

Tribulus has been demonstrated to have absolutely no side effects or contraindications, so it can be used year round.

Dosage: 1 to 2 capsules, 3 times a day

Saw Palmetto - is a natural steroid source herb with tissue building and gland stimulating properties to tonify and strengthen the male reproductive system. It is a primary herb for male impotence, low libido and prostate health.

Shou Wu Formula


It is a Jing tonic that enhances sexual and mental energy, fortifies the senses, building blood and producing sperm (doubling it in one month) in men and increasing fertility in women. It is also antiaging and rejuvenating. It can be used as blood tonic for women who are anemic.

Dosage: 2-4 capsules, 3 times per day

The ingredients include: Dang Gui root, aged citrus peel, jujube date red, licorice root, polygonum root, rehmannia root, and siberian ginseng root.

Reference:


<http://www.qualitychineseherbs.com/store/Stores/qualitychineseherbs/>

Plant	Characteristics	Images	Personal comments
<p>Maca (<i>Lepidium meyenii</i>)</p> <p>=====</p> <p>Smell: _____</p> <p>Blossoms: _____ _____ _____</p> <p>Leaves: _____ _____ _____</p> <p>roots: _____ _____ _____</p> <p>Other: _____ _____ _____</p>	<p>Maca (<i>Lepidium meyenii</i>): Also called Peruvian ginseng or pepperweed, maca was cultivated as early as 4000 B.C., throughout the Andean highlands. The Inca discovered this plant, and through them the Spanish after colonisation. In 1549, it is listed in the records as the only good sent as tribute to the colonial government, a much as 15000-18000 pounds. The high altitudes of the Andes made the Spaniards nearly infertile and they knew of Maca's tradition of increasing fertility and fortitude. It relieves frigidity in women and impotence in men; it revitalizes the internal organs and regulate menstruation, and relieves symptoms of menopause. It is also recommended for malnutrition, convalescence, memory loss, mental debility, and as a general tonic. It is also known as an aphrodisiac, revitalizer and regulator, anti-arthritic, helpful in respiratory maladies. This is why it was said about it: Maca is Life, Maca is Health.</p>		<p><i>I used it and</i></p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p>

Samples (plant, incense or oil):

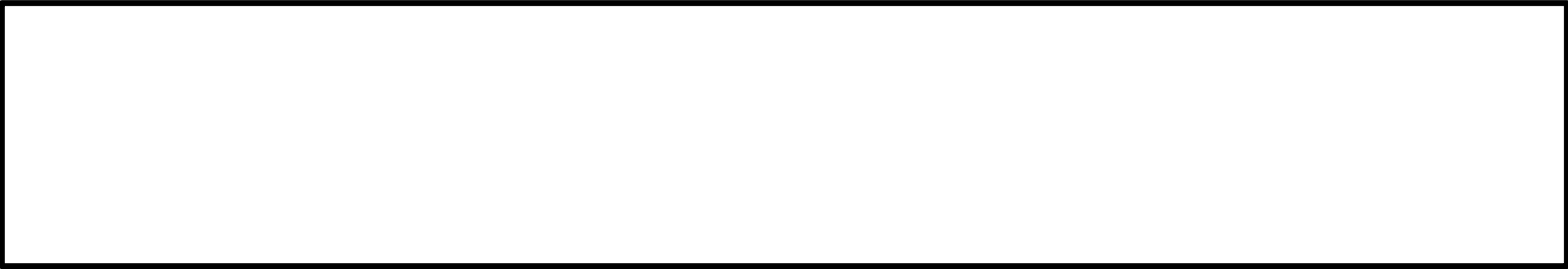
You can stick an envelope or a plastic bag here, and close samples in it or stick a real sample of the plant.



Plant	Characteristics	Images	Personal comments
<p>Red clover (trifolium pratense): ===== Smell: _____ Blossoms: _____ _____ Leaves: _____ _____ Other: _____ _____</p>	<p>Common in fields and along roadsides, it has bright pink blossoms from mid-summer to fall. Honeybees love it.</p> <p>The tops flowers and appending leaves can be eaten raw or cooked with grains for great nourishing value. If your vaginal mucus has been diagnosed as to acidic, red clover has the ability to alkalinize the body and vaginal mucus. To make an infusion, take one ounce by weight of the dried blossoms and boil in a quart of boiling water. Cover, and let steep at room temperature overnight (or for at least four hours). It is a good idea to use a jar because it closes tight. Drink from one to four cups a day. It may take up to several months to up to two years for a woman to conceive using this recipe, so be patient.</p>	<p>It is a rich in nutrients that support for the entire body. Red Clover has an alkalizing affect, which is very beneficial in balancing the overly acidic conditions from a modern diet.</p> 	<p><i>I used it and</i> </p>

Samples (plant, incense or oil):





You can stick an envelope or a plastic bag here, and close samples in it or stick a real sample of the plant.










Tables of Plants related to In/Fertility

Commonly used Emmenagogues and abortifacients		
<p>An emmenagogue is an herb which encourages menstrual bleeding. An abortifacient does the same. However, many emmenagogues are not strong enough to cause the pregnancy to abort but can influence miscarriage in weak individuals or when the fertilized egg is doomed.</p>		
Abortifacient	Bitters (all emmenagogues)	Emmenagogues (some of them abortifacient)
Plants that provoke abortion but can sometimes be useful for labor.		Plants that are used for a range of conditions in the female reproductive system that stimulate menstrual flow and activity.)
<p>Angelica (one of the members of this species is Don Quai): coordinate contractions, to help encourage the uterus to expel it's contents</p> <p>Blue Cohosh: encourage the uterus to contract. Susun Weed advises to use it before menstruation is due, or at 5-6 weeks of pregnancy for abortion.</p> <p>Cotton Root Bark: Interferes with progesterone, and the corpus luteum. Stimulates uterine contractions.</p> <p>Evening Primrose (<i>Oenothera hookeri</i>): can help "ripen the cervix" for labor.</p> <p>Parsley: combined with vitamin C is good for starting a late period (when not due to pregnancy).</p> <p>Pennyroyal: very toxic.</p> <p>Pineapple (unripe): women during their menses are discouraged to take pineapple</p>	<p>All bitters (plants that have a bitter taste) have emmenagogue effects.</p> <p>Common Herbal Bitters</p> <p>Barberry Boneset Centaury Chamomile Dandelion Gentian Golden Seal Horehound Mugwort Rue Southernwood Tansy Wormwood</p>	<p>Mild Emmenagogues: These include Parsley, Ginger (<i>Zingiber officinale</i>), Yarrow (<i>Achillea millefolium</i>), Feverfew (<i>Tanacetum parthenium</i>), Rosemary (<i>Rosemarinus officinalis</i>) and Sage (<i>Salvia officinalis</i>).</p> <p>Medium Strength Emmenagogues: Parsley (<i>Petroselinum sativum</i>), Queen Anne's Lace Seeds, Black Cohosh, Mugwort (<i>Artemisia vulgaris</i>), Juniper.</p> <p>Strong Emmenagogues: Pennyroyal (<i>Mentha pulegium</i>), Angelica, Savin, Rue, Tansy (<i>Tanacetum vulgare</i>), Asafetida, Blue Cohosh (<i>Caulophyllum thalictroides</i>), Vitamin C, celery seed, birthwort.</p> <p>Uterine Contracting Herbs: Angelica Root, Blue Cohosh, Ginger, Parsley, Pennyroyal, and Rosemary - by stimulating oxytocin. Blue Cohosh, Cotton Seed/Root, Angelica and Marijuana. - containing thujone. Tansy, Mugwort (<i>Artemisia vulgaris</i>), Juniper berries, Chamomile (<i>Marrubium vulgare</i>).</p>

<p>as the bleeding will become heavier. It provokes miscarriage. It takes at least 4-5 fresh medium sized young pineapples (light yellow and hard, not juicy at all) taken raw, within 2 days along with the few glasses of pure young pineapple juice (using juice extractor, of course), for abortion. But it is useless for women with a strong uterus.</p> <p>Tansy: very toxic. Vitamin C: the least toxic.</p>	<p>Yarrow</p>	<p>Herbs dislodging the fertilized egg. Angelica, Black Cohosh, Ginger, Horseradish, Queen Anne's Lace Seeds/Root</p> <p>Herbs causing estrogen-like side effects: Black Cohosh (<i>Cimicifuga racemosa</i>), Blue Cohosh, Qal, Pomegranate seeds.</p> <p>Implantation Inhibiting Herbs: Cotton Root, Juniper Root, Queen Anne's Lace Seeds, Vitamin C, Rue/Rutin.</p>
<p><i>References:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Emmenagogues: Are they or are they not? By David L. Hoffmann B.Sc. (Hons), M.N.I.M.H. 2. http://www.sisterzeus.com/List.htm 		

<h2 style="color: blue;">Uterine Tonics</h2> <p>(Plants that have a toning, strengthening, nourishing effect upon both the tissue and functioning of the female reproductive system.)</p>	
<p>Emmenagogues : Trigger menstruation.</p>	<p>The following herbs nourish the system: Mugwort, Yarrow, Partridge Berry, False Unicorn Root.</p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; align-items: center;"> <div style="text-align: center;">  <p>Mugwort</p> </div> <div style="text-align: center;">  <p>yarrow</p> </div> <div style="text-align: center;">  <p>Partridge berry</p> </div> <div style="text-align: center;">  <p>Helonias</p> </div> </div>
<p>Hormonal Normalizers : Have a direct impact upon hormonal levels in the body.</p>	<p>Chasteberry.</p>

<p>Uterine Astringents (that causes contraction of body tissues and canals):</p> <p>Herbs that reduce blood loss from the uterus (menorrhagia).</p>	<p>Beth Root, Yarrow, Periwinkle, Shepherd's Purse, American Cranesbill, Ladies Mantle</p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; align-items: center;">   </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; align-items: center;"> <p>Periwinkle</p> <p>Cranesbill geranium</p> </div>
<p>Uterine Tonics for Amenorrhoea (Absence or suppression of normal menstrual flow) & Dysmenorrhoea (Painful menstruation):</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Blue Cohosh: <i>Caulophyllum thalictroides</i>: promotes delivery, menstruation. Relieve nervous feebleness with irritability, as in crampings of the bowels, twitching of the muscles in typhoid and parturient cases, hysteria, painful menstruation, colic, chronic inflammation of the womb, etc. It sustains the nervous system, but at the same time soothes it. - Helonias: <i>Chamaelirium luteum</i>: used in painful menstruation when there is engorgement. - Black Cohosh or black bugbane or black snakeroot: <i>Cimicifuga racemosa</i>: promotes menstrual discharge and return of menses, and increase contractility of the unstriated fibres of the uterus (parturient). In menstrual disorders, accompanied with aching or muscular soreness and cool skin. Relieves amenorrhoea. - Senecio: <i>Senecio aureus</i>: Relieves nervous irritation mildly, restores tonicity; promotes normal regular flow, in atonic cases, and prevents excesses. - Cranberry bush: <i>Viburnum opulus</i>: allays uterine irritation. - Black Haw: <i>Viburnum prunifolium</i>: used in amenorrhoea in pale, bloodless subjects, restoring the menses. Used in menstrual pains and spasmodic pains. <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; align-items: center; margin-top: 20px;">      </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; align-items: center; margin-top: 10px;"> <p>Blue Cohosh</p> <p>Black haw</p> <p>Senecio</p> <p>Cranberry bush</p> </div>

<p>Tonic & Other Gynecological Uses</p>	<p>Blue Cohosh: <i>Caulophyllum thalictroides</i>: employed to relieve irritation of the reproductive organs. Helonias: <i>Chamaelirium luteum</i>, Black Cohosh: <i>Cimicifuga racemosa</i>, Partridge berry: <i>Mitchella repens</i>, Senecio: <i>Senecio aureus</i>, Black Haw: <i>Viburnum prunifolium</i></p>
<p>Partus preparator</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Blue Cohosh: <i>Caulophyllum thalictroides</i>: used by delicate women, or those who experience prolonged and painful labors, for several weeks previous to confinement, it gives tone and vigor to all the parts engaged in the labor, facilitating its progress, and relieving much suffering. - Helonias or false unicorn root: <i>Chamaelirium luteum</i>: It is considered useful by some for the relief of the vomiting of pregnancy. - Black Cohosh: <i>Cimicifuga racemosa</i>: It is an excellent partus preparator if given for several weeks before confinement. It is a diagnostic agent to differentiate between spurious and true labor pains, the latter being increased, while the former are dissipated under its use. - Partridge berry: <i>Mitchella repens</i>: the squaws drink a decoction of this plant for several weeks previous to their confinement, for the purpose of rendering parturition safe and easy. Used for several weeks before parturition, it allays the uterine crampings incident to the latter period of gestation, and so strengthens this organ as to make an easy labor much more probable. - Senecio: <i>Senecio aureus</i>: used in extreme loss of tone. - Cranberry bush: <i>Viburnum opulus</i>: relaxes cramps and spasms of all kinds, as asthma, hysteria, cramps of the limbs or other parts in females, especially during pregnancy, and it is said to be highly beneficial to those who are subject to convulsions during pregnancy, or at the time of parturition, preventing the attacks entirely, if used daily for the last 2 months of gestation. Like <i>Viburnum prunifolium</i>, it is a remedy for the prevention of abortion, and to prepare the way for the process of parturition. - Black Haw: <i>Viburnum prunifolium</i> It is considered almost specific for cramp in the legs, not dependent on pregnancy, especially when occurring at night. False pains of pregnancy are readily controlled, and for after pains it is nearly as valuable as <i>Cimicifuga</i>. Black haw promptly allays ovarian irritation.
<p>Child Birth (Labor & After Labor)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Blue Cohosh: <i>Caulophyllum thalictroides</i> the Indian squaws prepared a decoction of the root for 2 or 3 weeks previous to labor to facilitate child-birth. During labor it relieves false pains and coordinates muscular contractions, at the same time increasing their power. It stimulates normal contraction instead of inducing spasmodic uterine action. Useful when the uterine action is becoming weary; in which case it may be combined with <i>Cypripedium</i> and a very little <i>Capsicum</i> (or Bayberry). - Black Cohosh: <i>Cimicifuga racemosa</i> It is the best and safest agent known for the relief of after-pains, and is effectual in allaying the general excitement of the nervous system after labor. Decidedly and powerfully expediting delivery when the uterine action becomes weary and irritable. Prevents postpartum hemorrhage. Relieves severe aching and muscular soreness. - Senecio: <i>Senecio aureus</i> Is not depended upon during labor. After labor it restores lochia, promotes normal uterine contractions, antagonizes a tendency to relaxation; promotes normal after pains, and tends to prevent excessive flow. - Black Haw: <i>Viburnum prunifolium</i> Restores normal tone following labor, as well as normal capillary circulation, prevents subinvolution, prolapse, and malposition. <p>Threatened Miscarriage</p>

- **Blue Cohosh:** *Caulophyllum* It is a good remedy for **after pains**, especially when spasmodic in character. *Caulophyllum* acts as an **anti-abortive** by relieving the irritation upon which the trouble depends.

- **Helonias or false unicorn root:** *Chamaelirium* It rarely fails to arrest a **threatened abortion**. Not to be relied upon in emergency.

- **Cranberry bush:** *Viburnum opulus* Like *Viburnum prunifolium*, it is a remedy for the prevention of abortion, and to prepare the way for the process of parturition.

- **Black Haw:** *Viburnum prunifolium* Most valued in threatened abortion. It should be given in small doses for a considerable length of time. Women who have previously been unable to go to full term benefit from it. Reliable in emergencies if given in full doses, frequently repeated. Reliable in habitual abortion; will prevent induced abortion if membranes not ruptured.

References:

1. Herbs, Fertility & Contraception, by David L. Hoffmann B.Sc. (Hons), M.N.I.M.H: <http://www.healthy.net/>
2. Emmenagogues: Are they or are they not?, by David L. Hoffmann B.Sc. (Hons), M.N.I.M.H.: <http://www.healthy.net/>
3. Uterine Tonics by David L. Hoffman B.Sc. (Hons), M.N.I.M.H.: <http://www.healthy.net/>

Plants with Anti Fertility Actions

- **Montanoa** or Anzac flower or tree daisy: used as oral contraceptive by traditional Mexican medicine as early as the 16th.C. Both species: *Montanoa frutescens* (decreases cell viability and sperm motility) and *montanoa tormentosa* (no influence upon sperm). They are used to induce labor, used in the treatment of postpartum bleeding and as a menses inducer.
- **Lawsonia inermis or henna or camphire or Avrodhak:** Part of ayurvedic medicine. An emmenagogue. Interestingly, traditional cultures used this dye in order to promote sterility by applying symbolic designs on the skin.
- **Hibiscus rosa sinensis:** is believed to cause infertility by ayurvedic medicine. The plant is found in India and Burma. It works by inhibition of implantation. It affects the generation of sperm.
- **Malvaviscus conzattii:** an Indian ornamental plant whose flowers resemble closely those of the Hibiscus. It works by damaging the testes.
- **Embelia ribes:** The berries contain embelin that have an anti-implantation effect. It possesses anti-estrogenic activities causing an imbalance in the hormonal harmony.



lawsonia inermis (henna)



Hibiscus



malvaviscus

References:

1. Herbs, Fertility & Contraception by David L. Hoffmann B.Sc. (Hons), M.N.I.M.H.
2. Levine: The Mexican plant zoapatle (*Montanoa tomentosa*) in reproductive medicine. Past, present and future. J REPROD MED (1981 Oct) 26(10):524-8
3. Gallegos AJ et. al.: The zoapatle I -- A traditional remedy from Mexico emerges to modern times. CONTRACEPTION 1983 Mar; 27(3):211-25
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7. Gallegos AJ et. al.: The zoapatle. VI. Revisited. Idem pp.487-97
8. Kong et.al.: Fertility regulating agents from traditional Chinese medicines. J ETHNOPHARMACOL 1986 Jan; 15(1):1-44
9. Munshi, Shetye & Nair: Antifertility activity of three indigenous plant preparations. PLANTA MEDICA 1977 Vol. 31: 73-75
10. Kholkute et.al: Studies on the Anti-fertility uses of *Hibiscus rosa sinensis*. PLANTA MEDICA 1977 Vol. 31 : 35-39
11. Joshi: Antifertility effects of chronically administered *Malvaviscus conzattii*. PLANTA MEDICA 1981 Vol. 41 : 274-280
12. Prakash: Anti-fertility investigations on Embellin. PLANTA MEDICA 1981Vol 41 : 259-266

Plants that inhibits Sperm Motility (i.e., movement)

(with high concentration of these herbs)

Saw palmetto: prostate health when the prostate is enlarged because it shrinks it. Berries used traditionally by Native Americans to teat the symptoms of urinary tracts problems. Used to improve sperm production. To increase breast size and sexual vigor.

Ginkgo biloba; Echinacea; St. John's wort; Licorice



Ginkgo biloba



Saw palmetto



St John's wort

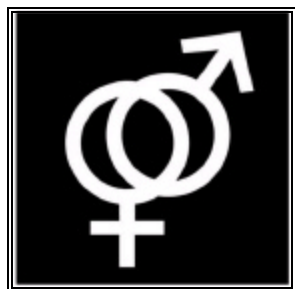


Branches of St-John's-wort (*Hypericum perforatum*), with flower and young fruit. — a, cluster of stamens; b, fruit.

References:

1. "Inhibition of human sperm motility by specific herbs used in alternative medicine" by Ondrizek RR, Chan PJ, Patton WC, King A.
2. Armanini D, Palermo M. Reduction of serum testosterone in men by licorice. N Engl J Med. 1999;341:1158
3. Female Infertility By John Scott, O.M.D.

Fertility and trying to conceive



Female and male symbols, showing that to conceive one must be two.

"My Lord, grant me from Your bounty wholesome children. Indeed, You are the hearer of prayers" (3:38)

Fertility in the Noble Qur'aan:

There are stories of miracle fertilization in the Qur'aan. We should not forget about them when we put our trust into Allaah and we should be patient.

The story of Mariam (RA):

When the wife of Imran said: *'O my Lord! I have vowed to You what is in my womb [my child] to be dedicated to Your services, so accept this [my vow] from me. Verily, All-Hearer, the All-Knowing.'* Then she delivered her she said: *'O my Lord! I have delivered a female child' - and Allah knew better what she delivered - 'And the male is not like the female, and I have named her Maryam and I seek refuge with You for her and for her offspring from Satan, the outcast.'* " [3:35-36]

The wife of Imran, and mother of Mary, out of her devotion to God vowed to dedicate the child in her womb to the sacred service of God and asked God to accept her vow. Her hopes were in a male child who will be brought up to service the places of worship and be dedicated to serve God.

"And mention in the Book, Maryam [i.e. mention, O Mohammed, in the Quran the story of Mary], when she withdrew from her family to a place facing east. She placed a screen from them; then We sent to her our angel (Jibrael, or Gabriel), and he appeared before her in the form of a man in full human form. She said: 'I seek refuge with The Most Beneficent [God] from you, if you do fear Him.' (The angel) said: 'I am only a Messenger from your Lord, (to announce) to you the gift of a righteous son.' She said: 'How can I have a son, when no man has touched me, nor am I unchaste?' He (the angel) said: 'So (it will be), your Lord said: 'That is easy for Me: And to appoint him as a sign to mankind and a mercy from Us (from God)', and it is a matter (already) decreed (by God).'" [Qur'an 19:16-21]

The story of prophet Ibraheem (AS):

"And his wife [Sarah] was standing (there) and she laughed: But we gave her glad tidings of Isaac and after him, of Jacob. She said "Alas for me! Shall I bear a child, seeing I am an old woman, and my husband here, is an old man? That indeed would be a wonderful thing!" They said: "Dost thou wonder at Allah's decree? The grace of Allah and His blessings on you, O ye people of the house! For He is indeed worthy of all praise, full of Glory!"" [Qur'an 11:71-73]

"...And they (angels) gave him (Ibrahim) glad tidings of a son endowed with knowledge. But his wife came forward clamoring, she smote her forehead and said: "A barren old woman!" They said "Even so has thy Lord spoken and He is full of wisdom and knowledge."" [Qur'an 51:28-30]

The Noble Qur'an tells us that Sarah (RA) was old and barren when Allah blessed her with a child. Exegesis place her age at about ninety and Ibrahim (AS) was over 100 years old. It was several years before this that Sarah gave her hand maiden,

Hagar (RA), to Ibrahim (AS) in marriage so that he may have children.

Zakariya (AS) and his wife Ishba (RA):

“There did Zakariya pray to his Lord, saying: “O my Lord! Grant unto me from Thee a progeny that is pure: for Thou art He that heareth prayer! While he was standing in prayer in the chamber, the angels called unto him: “Allah doth give thee glad tidings of Yahya, witnessing the truth of a Word from Allah, and (be besides) noble, chaste, and a prophet, - of the (goodly) company of the righteous.” He said: “O my Lord! How shall I have son, seeing I am very old, and my wife is barren?” “Thus,” was the answer, “Doth Allah accomplish what He willeth.”” [Qur’an 3:38-40]

“(This is) a recital of the Mercy of thy Lord to His servant Zakariya. Behold! he cried to his Lord in secret, Praying: “O my Lord! infirm indeed are my bones, and the hair of my head doth glisten with grey: but never am I unblest, O my Lord, in my prayer to Thee” [Qur’an 19:2-4]

And (remember) Zakariya, when he cried to his Lord: “O my Lord! leave me not without offspring, though thou art the best of inheritors.” So We listened to him: and We granted him Yahya: We cured his wife’s (Barrenness) for him. These (three) were ever quick in emulation in good works; they used to call on Us with love and reverence, and humble themselves before Us”. [Qur’an 21:89-90]

Asya (RA) never conceived a child. It is said that her marriage was one of sacrifice she made for the safety of her people because the marriage was never consummated, for Allah had stricken Pharaoh with impotence. Here is a childless woman, who is set forth as an example for all believers. She nurtured a Prophet from infancy even though he was not her own, and she was a martyr.

“And Allah sets forth, as an example to those who believe the wife of Pharaoh: Behold she said: “O my Lord! Build for me, in nearness to Thee, a mansion in the Garden, and save me from Pharaoh and his doings, and save me from those that do wrong”” [Qur’an 66:11]

References:

1. Qur'an translation by brother Yusuf Ali.
2. "Women in the Qur'an, Traditions and Interpretation" by Barbara Freyer Stowasser ISBN 0-19-508480-2
Stories of sisters with infertility problems:
<http://www.angelfire.com/la/IslamicView/Stories.html>
3. Support group for Muslimah who experience infertility:
<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/Muslimah-Fertility/>

Determining Ovulation:

There are only a few days each menstrual cycle when conception is possible.

In a woman's lifetime she will normally produce 4 to 5 thousand eggs. Eight of these eggs are recruited each month, and only one is brought to maturity and released into the fallopian tube, the other seven eggs deteriorate and die. The egg only lives from 24-36 hours after it is released, and dies if it is not fertilized by the sperm that can live 72 hours in the woman's womb under ideal conditions.

Every month a couple has basically 1 in 4 chance of conceiving.

There are a few techniques that a woman can use in order to be aware of her most fertile days:

The 1) **Basal Body Temperature (BBT)** and the 2) **cervical fluid** (a liquid emitted by your cervix and visible in the vagina) are the best indicators of your fertile periods.

Many people think that women ovulate or are most fertile on day 14 of their menstrual cycle or 14 days before their period is

expected. If this is true for some women, it is not true for others. Ovulation can occur at any time in the female menstrual cycle.

1) Basal Body Temperature, increases after ovulation due to increased progesterone in your bloodstream.

2) Cervical fluid is sometimes called cervical mucus and it changes consistency and color throughout your cycle.

Observations of the position and texture of your cervix can be checked using a mirror.

Cervical mucus is crucial for the sperm to travel up to the outer third part of the fallopian tubes for conception.

Your menstrual cycle is driven by your hormones.

They are biochemical substances that run through the bloodstream in order to affect different parts of the body.

The hormones controlling your fertility are produced in your hypothalamus (located in the brain); your anterior pituitary gland (located behind the hypothalamus); your ovaries; and your adrenal glands (located on top of the kidneys).

The **Follicle Stimulating Hormone (FSH)** stimulates the development and **maturation of follicles** (containing the eggs or half your baby) in the ovaries. **The developing follicles begin to produce estrogen.**

It causes the lining of the uterus (the endometrium) to grow and thicken in preparation of implantation of a fertilized egg.

By about the seventh day (but this date can vary), the dominant follicle produces a sharp rise in estrogen. It is at its peak one to two days prior to ovulation.

This **estrogen releases LH** (Luteinizing Hormone) which is what is measured by ovulation predictor kits (OPKs).

If there is no fertilization (or pregnancy), the corpus luteum dies, progesterone levels fall and a new cycle begins.

LH permits the sac of the follicle to break and release the egg into the Fallopian tube where it can be fertilized. This process is called ovulation.

LH's pick that triggers ovulation occurs 12-24 hours prior to ovulation, but LH actually begins concentrating about 36 hours before ovulation.

Estrogen drops dramatically after ovulation.

A common pattern of in/fertility cycle for women:

Days 1-5	Days 6-11	Days 12-18	Days 19-30
Menstruation	Dry days	Fertile period (even if a woman ovulated on the 17, the sperm can stay in the womb for 72 hours!)	Infertile period

Chances of Pregnancy by Day of Intercourse								
day zero is ovulation								
-5	-4	-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3
0%	11%	15%	20%	26%	15%	9%	5%	0%

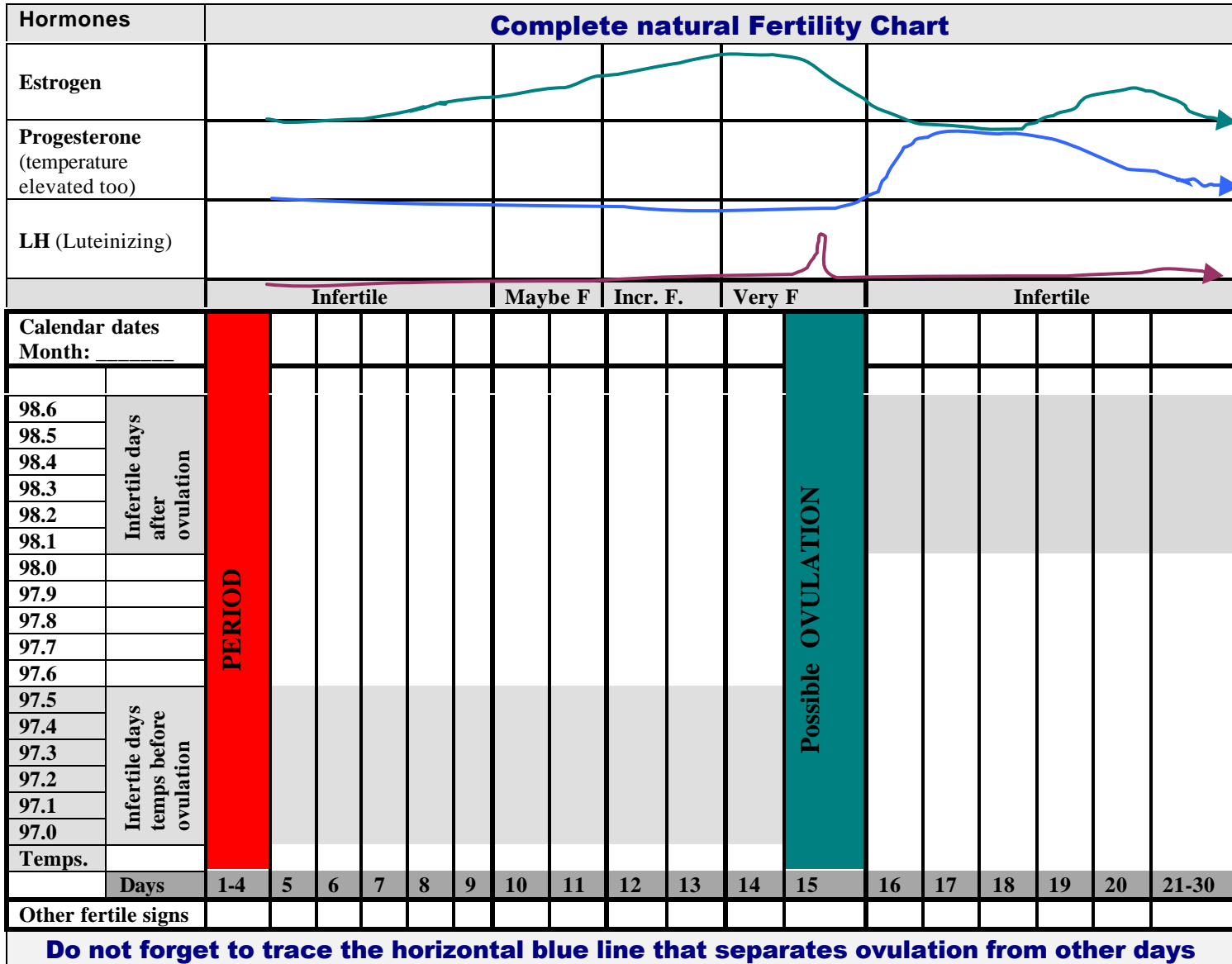
The phase of your cycle after ovulation is called the luteal phase that produces some estrogen and predominantly progesterone hormone.

Progesterone, like estrogen, is needed to develop the endometrium so that a fertilized egg can implant.

Your BBT (Basal Body Temperature) rises as a result of progesterone.

Temperatures and cervix fluid / position chart explained:

	<u>First Phase: infertility:</u>	<u>Second Phase: During Ovulation</u>	<u>Third Phase: after ovulation:</u>	<u>Fourth Phase: fertilization: (pregnancy)</u>
Hormones and temperature	Pre-ovulatory period: before ovulation has occurred, temps will normally be between 97.0 to 97.5.	Right before ovulation occurs the hormone estrogen is produced causing lower temperatures. ATTENTION! Temperatures can rise and fall multiple times before a dip. Lowest temperature is most likely NOT peak day either. A dip in temperature followed by a rise (at least 2/10's of a degree) higher than all temps the previous six days and staying at or beyond this level for at least 3 consecutive days shows that ovulation has occurred.	In the second phase (Luteal Phase) which begins after ovulation, temperatures generally will rise between 97.6 and 98.6 due to the hormone progesterone which is released from the corpus luteum (the follicle that hold the egg). The temperatures will remain high for 12 to 16 days until they drop again the day period begin. If conception occurs temperatures will remain high during the entire pregnancy.	Temperatures climb 3/10's - 4/10's over the Luteal Phase high. This is due to the HCG (Human Chorionic Gonadotropin) hormone that is produced if conception has occurred and when implantation takes place.
Cervical fluid	After menstruation for a period of 3 to 5 days the cervix fluid is minimal or non-existent. Fluid is clear or slightly white and dries quickly on fingers. Then cervical Fluid becomes sticky for a period of 2 to 3 days. It feels slightly gummy but not wet.	Cervical fluid is much more abundant and will feel wet for 2 to 4 days. It can be thick, creamy, milky and will form peaks in your fingertips. It looks like glue. Color is white or yellow and vagina is wet. At the pick of the fertile days, the fluid will be like an eggwhites for 1 to 5 days. It is slippery to the touch and if pulled between the fingertips will stretch 1 to 10 inches. The color is clear and vagina is very wet.	Cervical fluid will now change drastically due to the drop in estrogen and the surge of progesterone following ovulation. It can be dry, watery, moist or sticky and dries up quickly on fingertips. The vagina is dry.	
Cervix position	After your menstrual period, the cervix is low and easily reached with your fingertips. The opening to the cervix is closed (a slit of tiny hole). It is hard like the tip of your nose.	Right before ovulation, the rise in estrogen causes the cervix to rise (out of reach of your fingers). The opening gets large and feels soft to the touch like touching your lips.	Estrogen subsides and the hormone progesterone is released causing the cervix to return to its low, closed and hard position.	



Temperature (use a BBT labeled thermometer)	Between 97.0 to 97.5.			Lower (dip)	Rises between 97.6 and 98.6 (2/10's higher than all previous temps) If pregnant, 3/10's - 4/10's higher.
Cervix Fluid	C.F. dry or drying quickly on fingertips or liquid. Dry vagina	Sticky, pasty. Vagina not wet.	Creamy, thick, cold. Little wet	Raw eggwhite, slippery, shiny, stretches Very wet.	C.F. dry or drying quickly on fingertips or liquid. Dry vagina
Cervix Position	Cervix low, firm, closed			High, soft, open	Low, firm, closed
In/fertility Phases	Infertile (Menstruation minimal duration: 4 days + 3-5 days after menstruation)	Maybe fertile (2-3 day)	Increased fertility (2-4 days)	Very fertile (1-2 day)	Infertile

Signs of fertility:

Take your temperature every morning at the same time, before getting up, and at least after three hours of sleep. It is better to take the BBT vaginally. Do not change take the temps vaginally one day, orally another; stay consistent.

Check cervix after washing hands, always at the same time.

Squat or place one foot on a stool. Slide your fingers as far as you can in your vagina until you find an obstacle smoother, rounder and firmer than the surrounding vaginal tissues.

Other signs of fertility may be recorded as well to determine patterns:

Ovulation Pain, known as mittelschmerz (middle pain).

Increased Sex Drive before and at ovulation.

Ovulation spotting is rare. You will see blood or a pink tinge.

Tender Breasts may occur around time of ovulation and continue throughout luteal phase (until period) due to increased progesterone.

Miscellaneous: changes in complexion, energy level, moods, eating habits, etc.

Charting temperatures (ovulation occurs day 15)								
Day 09	Day 10	Day 11	Day 12	Day 13	Day 14	Day 15	Day 16	Day 17
98.2	98.2	98.2	98.2	98.2	98.2	98.2	98.2	98.2
98.1	98.1	98.1	98.1	98.1	98.1	98.1	98.1	98.1
98.0	98.0	98.0	98.0	98.0	98.0	98.0	98.0	98.0
97.9	97.9	97.9	97.9	97.9	97.9	97.9	97.9	97.9
97.8	97.8	97.8	97.8	97.8	97.8	97.8	97.8	97.8
97.7	97.7	97.7	97.7	97.7	97.7	97.7	97.7	97.7
97.6	97.6	97.6	97.6	97.6	97.6	97.6	97.6	97.6
97.5	97.5	97.5	97.5	97.5	97.5	97.5	97.5	97.5

Explanation:

These are temperatures taken when waking up and before raising out of bed. Illness, stress, lack of sleep, medication, high impact exercise, hot weather can cause temperatures to rise.

When you have identified a temperature that is at least 2/10's of a degree higher than the previous 6 days, draw a blue line on your chart (see day 16, after ovulation).

In this example, ovulation occurred the 15, the last day the cervix fluid was eggwhite and the vagina very wet. Conception should occur the 15 or the 14. To help sperm reach uterus, you can elevate your buttock half an hour after intercourse.

References:

1. For complete details about ovulation charts, see online book, at:
<http://www.fertilityfriend.com/HelpCenter/FFBook/index.html>
2. Free charting online:
<http://www.fertilityfriend.com/sm/0/fforeg.html>
3. Quick temperatures conversion:

Celsius/Fahrenheit Conversion Chart												
C °	35	35.3	35.6	35.8	36.1	36.4	36.7	36.9	37	37.2	37.5	37.8
F °	95	95.5	96	96.5	97	97.5	98	98.5	99	99.5	100	37.8

Test your BBT and Fertility charting knowledge with this quiz:

QUESTIONS:

1. The female menstrual cycle starts at:

- a. The last day of your menstrual period
- b. The first day of your menstrual period
- c. When your temperature rises

2. The ovulation occurs:

- a. 14 Days after the period
- b. At the temperature rise or one or two days before
- c. 14 Days before the period

3. The temperature rise occurs the day when:

- a. Your temperature dips slightly
- b. Your temperature is 0.2 degree higher than the 6 previous days
- c. Your temperature reaches 98.6 Fahrenheit

4. Your chance of being pregnant is higher if:

- a. Your temperature dips 8 days after ovulation
- b. Your BBT (basal body temperature) fluctuates
- c. Your BBT stays high for more than 18 days

5. The best time to conceive is:

- a. On the day of the temperature rises and your cervical fluid is watery.
- b. When your cervical mucus is thick.
- c. From 2 or 3 days before the temperature rises.

6. You are less likely to conceive:

- a. 3 days after ovulation
- b. The day after the cervix fluid becomes like an egg white
- c. The day of the BBT rises

7. The luteal phase starts:

- a. The day after the temperature rises
- b. The day of the temperature rises
- c. The day before the temperature rise

8. A sign of implantation is:

- a. A temperature of at least 98.2 F
- b. A spike 4 days after ovulation
- c. A slight spotting 8 to 10 days after ovulation

9. The best time to use a pregnancy test is:

- a. 14 days after ovulation
- b. 18 days after ovulation
- c. One day after the expected date for the period

10. In case of pregnancy, your cervical fluid will be:

- a. Egg white
- b. Creamy, Sticky or dry
- c. Yellow and thick

11. Your chances of getting pregnant each cycle is:

- a. 20%
- b. 50%
- c. 90%

12. Your luteal phase may be too short for an implantation if:

- a. Your ovulation is less than 10 days before your period
- b. Your ovulation is more than 10 days before your period
- c. Your ovulation is early

13. The sperm can live in the womb up to:

- a. 24 hours
- b. 3 days
- c. 5 days

14. The ovum (egg) can live in the womb:

- a. 2 days
- b. 3 days
- c. 5 days

ANSWERS:

1b; 2b; 3b; 4c; 5c; 6a; 7b; 8c; 9b; 10b; 11a; 12a; 13c; 14a.

CONTRACEPTION

Islam and Procreation:

Islam values procreation within marriage, and fertility is highly prized.

"Marry one who is loving and fertile, for I will be proud before the other Prophets of your great numbers on the Day of Resurrection." (Reported by Ahmad. Saheeh al-Irwa', 6/195).

Being "fertile" is actually the most important quality a woman must have after piety and purity. Ma`qil Ibn Yasar narrated, "A man came to the Prophet and said, 'I fell in love with a woman of great beauty and family status; but she does not conceive, shall I marry her?' He replied, 'No.' The man came to him again, and the Prophet forbade him. He came to him a third time, so the Prophet said, 'Marry the amiable, fertile one; for I will vie the nations in number by you'" (Abu Dawud, *Nikah* 4).

Al-Jaziri says, "It is better that she [the wife] be fertile; because a barren one cannot carry out the function of reproduction which is necessary for human society." (Abd al-Rahman al-Jaziri, *Kitab al-fiqh ala al-madsahib al-arba`a* (Cairo, 1934), 4:11.)

"Marry the loving and the fertile for I will outdo the nations with you[r numbers]. (In another version: "...for I will outdo the prophets with you[r numbers] on Qiyama." [Aby Dawaud]

Children are a gift of God, the "decoration of life," says the Qur'aan, but they are also a trial.

Sahih Muslim Hadith 6370 Narrated by Abu Hurayrah:

"AbuHassan said to AbuHurayrah: My two children had died. Would you narrate to me anything from Allah's Apostle (saws) a hadith which would soothe our hearts in our bereavements?"

He said: Yes. Small children are the fowls of Paradise. If one of them meets his father (or he said his parents) he would take hold of his cloth, or he said with his hand as I take hold of the hem of your cloth (with my hand). And he (the child) would not take off (his hand) from it until Allah causes his father to enter Paradise. This hadith has been narrated on the authority of Tamim with the same chain of transmitters. And he is reported to have said: Did you hear from Allah's Apostle (saws) anything which may soothe our heart in our bereavements? He said: Yes."

"When a person dies, his works come to an end (are cut off) except from three sources: except from an ongoing charity which he established or knowledge from which benefit is taken or a righteous offspring who makes du'a for him." [Muslim]

From Abi Saeed (ra) that the women said to the Prophet (saas), *"Reserve for us a day." So he (saas) preached to them and said, "Any woman who had three children die will find them to be a protection for them from the fire." One woman asked, "And two?" He (sas) said, "And two [as well]." [Bukhari]*

The Prophet (saas) said:

"Anything you spend on your family will be a source of reward [from Allah], even a morsel of food which you raise to your wife's mouth." [Ahmad]

"A dinar you spent in Allah's path, a dinar you spent in freeing a slave, a dinar which you gave in charity to a needy person and a dinar which you spent on your family. The greatest of them in reward is the one you spent on your family." [Muslim]

Contraception and Islam:

Muhammed's (saas) exhortation to multiply is encouraged by Islamic law, but family planning is allowed too.

A number of Quranic verses emphasize the notion that God does not wish to burden believers, with the implication that the well-being of children overrides concerns for a large family. As a result, early Muslim doctors recorded the tradition of herbal prescriptions to prevent pregnancy in Islamic books of medicine, which were used for centuries in Europe.

Muhammad, himself, did not forbid the practice of *al'azl* (withdrawal or coitus interruptus). By analogy, the use of other barrier methods, such as the condom and diaphragm, is permitted.

While some religious leaders consider the use of oral contraceptives or implants to be undesirable or even forbidden, most encourage their use as long as these methods do not interfere with a woman's health and well-being.

Some religious leaders argue that sterilization (Tubal ligation and vasectomy) does permanent harm to a person and is, therefore, unacceptable to Islam. Others argue that to the extent sterilization is reversible, it is permitted.

The Qur'an does not explicitly address abortion, but there is general agreement in Islam that abortion is only permitted for the most serious reasons, such as saving a woman's life. And even then, it is only allowed before "life is breathed" into the fetus, within 120 days after conception.

Coitus Interruptus (Al- 'Azl)

Azl is when the man withdraws when close to ejaculation in order to discharge outside the vaginal passage. 'Azl is something which is permitted by the Shar'a. i.e. it is allowed for a man when he has sexual intercourse with his wife to

discharge his semen, when close to ejaculation, outside the vaginal passage.

Bukhari has reported on the authority of 'Ata'a from Jabir that he said: *"We used to practise 'Azl in the time of the Messenger of Allah while the Qur'an was being revealed"*. And in Muslim: *"We used to practise 'Azl in the time of Allah's Messenger, he knew of it and he did not forbid us from it"*.

With regards to the permissibility of 'Azl there are also a number of authentic Ahadith. Narrated by Ahmad, Muslim and Abu Daud on the authority of Jabir: *"A man came to the Messenger of Allah and said: "I have a slave girl who is our servant. She carries water for us. I have intercourse with her, but I do not want her to become pregnant". He said: "Practise 'Azl, if you like. But what is decreed for her will come to her"*.

'Azl is permitted whether it is for the intention of not having offspring, or in sympathy for the wife because she is weak making it difficult for her to bear or give birth, or for any other reason.

Contraception in Islam is not regarded as the killing of a life:

Abu Daud has reported on the authority of Abu Said that a man said: *"O Messenger of Allah I have a slave girl and I practise 'azl with her. I do not want her to get pregnant but I desire what men desire. The Jews say that 'azl is the minor live burial of children". He said: "The Jews have lied. If Allah wanted to create a child you could not stop Him"*.

The permissibility of temporary birth control through 'azl or any other method of birth control does not mean the permissibility of abortion. So when the soul has been breathed into the foetus, its abortion is haram whether the abortion was brought about by taking a medicine, violent movements or medical operation.

"And kill not anyone whom Allah has forbidden, except for a just cause" [Al- Anam: 151]

Bukhari and Muslim reported from Abu Hurayra (ra) who said: *"Allah's Messenger gave a verdict regarding an aborted foetus of a woman from Bani Lihyan that the killer (of the foetus) should give a male or female slave (as a Diyya). And the minimum age of the foetus which requires blood money is when it appears to have some human features such as a finger, hand, feet, head, eye or fingernail"*.

But if the abortion took place before the soul was breathed in it, it has to be examined: if the abortion takes place after forty days from the beginning of the pregnancy when the formation of the foetus starts, it will be likewise haram, and it will take the hukm of aborting a foetus after the soul has been breathed into it. That is because when the development of the foetus begins and some limbs appear, it becomes certain that it is a living foetus on its way to becoming a complete human. So, it will be an aggression against a human life whose blood is sacred and it will be like burying it alive, a matter which Allah (swt) has forbidden.

An History of the World contraceptives:

Primitive people had a lot of superstitions concerning conception. They did not necessarily relate sex with conception, therefore some thought that the spirits of children lived in certain fruits, and that pregnancy was caused by eating the fruit, others held the sun, wind, rain, moon, or stars responsible for causing pregnancy and others gain considered sea foam particularly potent.

However, the people of antiquity had much more control over their fertility than we imagine.

The oldest **condoms** were found in the foundations of Dudley Castle in England. They were made of animal gut and dated back to 1640 but some say that they were used much earlier. A painting on the wall of a cave in France shows the use of condoms 12,000-15,000 years ago. Another ancient illustration of a condom was found in Egypt, more than 3,000 years ago. As recently as the 1990s, teens in Australia have used candy bar wrappers as condoms. Rubber condoms were mass-produced later, after 1843, after the invention of Charles Goodyear.

Throughout history women have used different substances to act as a **sponge** and block semen from reaching the uterus: vegetable seedpods, plugs of grass and crushed roots were used in Africa, wads of seaweed, moss, and bamboo were used in East Asia, and empty halves of pomegranates were used in ancient Greece.

The oldest reference to using sponges soaked in vinegar for contraception is from the Talmud.

Marie Stopes prescribed sponges moistened with olive oil at the beginning of the 20th century and reports the method effective.

As far back as 1850 B.C.E., in ancient Egypt, recipes for barrier methods of birth control were buried with the dead to prevent unintended pregnancy in the afterlife.

By 1550 B.C.E., Egyptian women used cotton-lint tampons soaked in the fermented juice of acacia plants to prevent pregnancy.

In ancient Egypt, contraceptive methods included an injecting a mixture of honey and natron into the vagina or crocodile dung. They had a home pregnancy test: women moistened a sample of barley and emmer (wheat) with their urine every day. If the

barley grew, it meant the baby was a boy; if the emmer grew, it was a baby girl; if nothing grew the woman was not pregnant.

In the first half of the sixth century, the Greek physician Aetios suggested that women smear their cervixes with cedar rosin combined with myrtle, lead, alum, or wine. He also suggested that their partners coat their penises with alum, pomegranate, gallnut, or vinegar.

Aristotle suggested washing the vagina with oil of cedar, ointment of lead, or frankincense mixed with olive oil.

In the first century C.E., Dioscorides recommended vaginal suppositories. His book, *De Materia Medica*, was used as contraceptive reference until the 16th century.

In first century India, women used rock salt soaked in oil for birth control. During the first century C.E., Indian women used honey, ghee (clarified butter), and palasha tree seeds. They also used elephant dung and water, used by Arab women in the 10th and 11th century.

Cocoa butter suppositories were sold in London from 1885 to 1960, and in the 1970s, some women in England inserted vitamin C tablets into their vaginas in order to kill the sperm.

Diaphragms and Cervical Caps are also ancient. Asian prostitutes applied oiled paper discs to their cervixes. The women of Easter Island used algae and seaweed.

Sponge, tissue paper, beeswax, rubber, wool, pepper, seeds, silver, tree roots, rock salt, fruits, vegetables, and even balls of opium have in turn been used for the same purpose.

Traditional German custom of applying disks of melted and molded beeswax to the cervix to prevent conception was imitated by modern scientists.

Plants and oral contraception have existed for a long time. In Greece, Persephone, the goddess of spring, is known to have remained infertile after eating but pomegranate seeds. Greek

women celebrated the goddess by using four plants: pomegranate, pennyroyal, pine, and vitex, also known as “chaste-tree” as birth control means.

In the seventh century B.C.E, Libya exported the flowering plant silphium that was a reliable contraceptive. However, due to its popularity, by the fourth century C.E., the plant was extinct.

Women in tropical India and Sri Lanka, eat a papaya a day when they want to prevent pregnancy because an enzyme, papain, in the fruit interacts with the hormone progesterone to prevent pregnancy.

Dangerous contraceptive means have also been used for centuries out of desperation. Chinese women are known to have drank lead and mercury to control fertility, which often resulted in sterility or death.

During the Middle Ages in Europe, magicians advised women to wear the testicles of a weasel on their thighs or hang its amputated foot from around their necks. Other amulets of the time were wreaths of herbs, desiccated cat livers or shards of bones from cats, flax lint tied in a cloth and soaked in menstrual blood, or the anus of a hare. It was also believed that a woman could avoid pregnancy by walking three times around the spot where a pregnant wolf had urinated. Recently, in Canada, women drank a potion of dried beaver testicles brewed in a strong alcohol solution.

Roman medical advice on contraception and abortion (Soranus)

“61. It is much more advantageous not to conceive than to destroy the embryo, one must consequently beware of having sexual intercourse at those periods which we said were suitable for conception. And during the sexual act, at the critical moment of coitus when the man is about to discharge the seed,

the woman must hold her breath and draw herself away a little, so that the seed may not be hurled too deep into the cavity of the uterus. And getting up immediately and squatting down, she should induce sneezing and carefully wipe the vagina all round; she might even drink something cold. It also aids in preventing conception to smear the orifice of the uterus all over before with old olive oil or honey or cedar resin or juice of the balsam tree, alone or together with white lead; or with a moist cerate containing myrtle oil and white lead; or before the act with moist alum, or with galbanum together with wine; or to put a lock of fine wool into the orifice of the uterus; or, before sexual relations to use vaginal suppositories which have the power to contract and to condense. For such of these things as are styptic, clogging and cooling cause the orifice of the uterus to shut before the time of coitus and do not let the seed pass into its fundus. [Such, however, as are hot] and irritating not only do not allow the seed of the man to remain in the cavity of the uterus, but draw forth as well another fluid from it.

62. And we shall make specific mention of some. Pine bark, tanning sumach, equal quantities of each, rub with wine and apply in due measure before coitus after wool has been wrapped around; and after two or three hours she may remove it and have intercourse. Another: Of Cimolian earth, root of panax, equal quantities, rub with water separately and together, and when sticky apply in like manner. Or: Grind the inside of fresh pomegranate peel with water, and apply. Or: Grind two parts of pomegranate peel and one part of oak galls, form small suppositories and insert after the cessation of menstruation. Or: Moist alum, the inside of pomegranate rind, mix with water, and apply with wool. Or: Of unripe oak galls, of the inside of pomegranate peel, of ginger, of each 2 drachms, mould it with wine to the size of vetch peas and dry indoors and give before

coitus, to be applied as a vaginal suppository. Or: Grind the flesh of dried figs and apply together with natron. Or: Apply pomegranate peel with an equal amount of gum and an equal amount of oil of roses. Then one should always follow with a drink of honey water. But one should beware of things which are very pungent, because of the ulcerations arising from them. And we use all these things after the end of menstruation ...” Soranus, *Gynecology* 1.60-65 (tr. O. Temkin)

Plants affecting fertility according to Dioscorides and the Elder Pliny (1st century AD)

Chaste-tree (*Vitex agnus-castus*)

It is a shrub nearly as high as a tree, growing near and in watery fields, and in rough and uneven places, bearing long sprigs and hard to be broken, but leaves are like those of the olive tree, yet tenderer and greater. Some of them bear a white flower inclining to purple, others a purple flower, but the seed as of pepper. It has a warming, binding faculty, but the fruit of it being drunk does help such as are stung by serpents, the splenetical and hydropsical. It both brings down the milk and expels the menstrea, being drunk to the quantity of a dram in wine. It destroys generation, it annoys the head, drawing on a deep sleep. The decoction of the herb and of the seed is good by insession for the griefs and inflammations about the womb.... [Dioscorides, *Materia Medica* 1.135]

Periclymenon [unidentified — possibly honeysuckle]

A little shrub, single, having by distances small leaves encompassing it, whitish like ivy, and by the leaves' shootings out are the seeds like ivy. On top is a white flower like the bean, a hard seed, somewhat round in a manner, lying upon the leaf and hard to be plucked out. The root thick and round. It grows in fields and hedges, and winds itself about the neighbouring shrubs. The seed of this being gathered when it is

ripe, and dried in the shade, is drunk, the quantity of a dram for 40 days, and it abates the spleen, and dissolves weariness, and is good for the orthopnea [breathing difficulties] and the singultus [hiccups?]. After the 6th day it makes one piss blood. It is also a birth-quickener, and the leaves have the same force, being drunk 37 days, and it is said, make men unfit for generation. Being anointed with oil on such as have ague fits by set returns, it drives away the shivering. [Dioscorides, *Materia Medica* 4.14]

The "big cedar" (*Juniperus excelsa*), which they call cedrelate, yields a pitch which is called cedria, very useful for toothache; for it breaks the teeth and brings them out, easing the pain. I have already described how cedrus juice is extracted from the wood, of great use for book-rolls [as a preservative?] were it not for the headache it causes. It preserves dead bodies uncorrupted by time, but causes living ones to decay.... I should also be afraid to rinse the teeth with it in vinegar, when they ache, or to drop it into the ears for hardness or hearing or worms. Gossip records a miracle: that to rub it all over the male part before coition prevents conception. I should not hesitate to use it as an ointment for phthiriasis [hair lice], or for scurf....[Elder Pliny, *H.N.* 24.17-18]

But it is dittany (*Origanum dictamnus*) which is of the greatest efficacy; it is an emmenagogue, and forces out the foetus when dead or lying transversely — an obolus of the leaves is taken in water — being so efficacious in these respects that it is not even introduced into the bedroom of pregnant women. Not only when taken in drink but also when used as embrocation or as a fumigation it has medicinal power. [Elder Pliny, *H.N.* 26.153]

Resources:

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<http://www.plannedparenthood.org/>
2. "The History of Birth Control", by Kathleen London:
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27. _____. (1994). "Ever Since Eve...Birth Control in the Ancient World." *Archaeology*, 47(2) (March/April), 29-35.
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Some Modern Male Contraceptives:

All sterile means below are thought to be reversible and safe.

Nifedipine

Developed by Susan Benoff, a leading researcher in male infertility in New York, Nifedipine works by slowing the movement of calcium through the cell membranes.

The Male Pill

In a method similar to the female pill, Handelsman uses the hormone progestin to suppress the hormone gonadotrophin (GnRH), which helps in sperm production. After three months on progestin, no active sperm remained in the majority of men tested and once progestin is removed GnRH kicks back in and restocks the sperm. There are some side effects: acne, weight-gain and sleep disturbances.

Immunocontraceptives

In this method the body's immune system attacks the sperm.

SMA

The polymer SMA (styrene maleic anhydride) is injected into the vas deferens (the tube that carries sperm from the testes to the penis). SMA blocks the vas and lowers the pH of the tube resulting in the death of most of the sperm.

SMA lasts for three months to five years, and fertility can be restored by another injection.

The Shug

A silicone double plug with nylon tails that block off the vas and the sperm.

More than a million Chinese men are using the silicone plug which blocks the vas, but unlike the shug, it can be reversed only once.

Ultrasound

Testes are heated for a few minutes by ultrasound. Ultrasound changes the levels of potassium and sodium in the testes, making the environment inhospitable to sperm. It lasts six months.

Hot tub

In 1946, in India, Martha Voegeli discovered that a man could achieve six months sterility by emerging his testicles to a forty-five-minute-long in a hot bath (116 degrees Fahrenheit) every day for three weeks.

Polyester Suspensories

"You can cook sperm by wearing the right underwear," says Audrey Schulman in "The Male Pill, Searching for a Sure-Fire male Contraceptive." In 1992 an Egyptian researcher, Ahmed Shafik discovered that temporary sterility occurred when testes were being compressed four months in a row by tight underwear by elevating the sperm's temperature. This is the reason why testes pull out of the body during Summer time but are closer to the body during Winter time. It is reported not uncomfortable.

References:

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2. Audrey Schulman, The Male Pill, Searching for a Sure-Fire Male Contraceptive
3. Looking for the Male Pill, Herndon, N. Network, Vol 13, No 1., 1992
4. Breastfeeding and Natural Child Spacing, by Sheila K. Kippley . A helpful, informative book that explains why ecological breastfeeding does space babies.
5. The nursing Mother's Guide to Weaning, by Kathleen Huggins, Linda Ziedrich
6. <http://www.reproline.jhu.edu/>
Power Point presentation sheets for teachers.

7. How I was born? by Lennart Nilsson, Lena Katarina Swanberg (Contributor), 1996
Nilsson's astonishing photographs of developing fetuses illuminate an informative story narrated by a five-year-old girl whose mother is pregnant.
8. A Child is born, by Lennart Nilsson.
Pictures of the fetus.
9. Beginning life, by Geraldine Lux Flanagan
A photographic tour of the entire process of life from conception to childbirth
10. The Pregnancy Journal; A Day-To-Day Guide to a Healthy and Happy Pregnancy, by A. Christine Harris PhD. A nice simple pregnancy journal featuring quotes, history of childbirth, what to expect and when to do certain tests, etc.
11. Countdown to a miracle, by Julie B. Carr.
It is a spiral bound book that counts down the days to the birth of your baby. Each day tells a little something about the growth of the baby. It works like a calendar.
12. The baby Book, everything you need to know about your baby from birth to age two, by William Sears, M.D., and Martha Sears, R.N. Little, brown and company, 1993
A favorite. It tells you everything you need to know and also things you did not think about. Thorough.
13. <http://www.malecontraceptives.org/a>
An interesting site listing the most common contraceptive male solutions and their dangers. They also have a mailing list.

Herbal Contraceptives & Implantation Inhibitors

Herbal contraceptives include all herbs that have an anti-fertility effect. There are many different ways in which herbs can impair fertility: by affecting the ovary, the uterus, hormone production, and else. Some herbs have the ability to interfere with implantation, and are called emmenagogues, but not all emmenagogues can be used as emergency contraceptives. Other herbs interfere with normal sperm production, or mobility.

Does herbal contraception works?

It all depends on the woman and the strength of her uterus. As a rule, these remedies have 50% chance of success.

Daily Herbal Contraceptives:

Some herbal contraceptives need to be taken regularly (daily) in order to maintain their contraceptive effect.

Wild Yam (*Dioscorea villosa*)



A contraceptive herb that is safe to take on a daily basis, for extended periods of time with no side effects.

Read a midwife account: Wild Yam, by Willa Shaffer:

Publisher: Woodland Publishing; (November 2011) **ISBN:** 0913923109 (8 pages).

Wild Yam works by thickening the outer covering of the egg's "shell" so that the sperm are unable to penetrate.

Wild yam is very good for the liver and endocrine system because it tones and nourishes the liver, helping to balance hormone production.

Wild Yam can be used for a variety of women's issues including menstrual irregularity, menstrual cramps, infertility, menopause and endometriosis.

Its infusion is the strongest preparation to prevent miscarriage, because it relaxes the uterus and soothes the nerves.

It is also used for after birth pains and tincture given in cold water. In hot water, it could create an hemorrhage.

Wild yam can be used to both promote and decrease fertility, depending on **the amount taken and when** in the cycle it is taken and for how long.

When taken between menstruation and ovulation in small doses, it increases fertility.

As contraceptive, the doses are higher and it is taken the whole cycle and it takes two months to take effect. Wild yam must be taken twice a day to be effective, Mrs Shaffer writes, "You must take them as prescribed, you cannot go away for the weekend, forget your birth control and "make up for it" by taking 12 capsules when you return home. If you miss, protect yourself with another [contraceptive] method until you are sure you are safe again."

As a contraceptive, take pre-packaged capsules of wild yam, 1275 mg to 1500 mg twice a day, every day or 3 size "OO" capsules, twice a day, every day.

Note that anti-biotics both herbal (garlic, echinacea, goldenseal, or other herbs) and pharmaceutical negate the contraceptive effect of wild yam.

Neem oil (*Azadirachta indica* or *Melia azadirachta*) :

It is a tree from India with numerous uses.

For women it is used vaginally as a spermicide, and men use it orally as a daily contraceptive to induce temporary sterility.

Queen Anne's Lace Seeds (*Daucus carota*)

It can be used as a daily contraceptive or only during fertile times as an implantation inhibitor. The seeds have to be chewed with fruit juice to mask the strong taste or water. If the seeds are simply swallowed whole, they will pass right through your system, without releasing their oils and not be effective.

Dosage is 1 tsp chewed per day for an average woman. Seeds can be chewed daily, throughout the cycle, or following

unprotected sex, for 7 to 10 days or, if using the ovulation chart, seeds can be taken only during her fertile time, adding 6 days after ovulation.

Women with kidney problems or otherwise using blood pressure or estrogen medications should avoid the herb altogether.



Here are the sources I have found so far to purchase organic Queen Anne's Lace seeds.

Implantation Inhibitors:

Some herbal contraceptives have the ability to interfere with implantation of the egg.

Pomegranate (*Punica granatum*). Rudolf Fritz Weiss notes the seeds contain an oestrone identical to the genuine hormone [estrogen].

Implantation occurs about 6 days after the egg has been fertilized. If the egg is unable to get a grip on the uterine wall, it cannot survive, and dies.



Branch of Pomegranate with Flowers. — a, the fruit; b, the fruit, transverse section; c, flower, longitudinal section, the petals removed.

Queen Anne's Lace Seeds (*Daucus carota*), Qal seeds or Wild Carrot seems to be the most reliable. It has been used by women from the Appalachian Mountains to India for hundred of years.

This herb can be used like an emergency contraceptive, and can be taken on an as needed basis.

It can be confused with other poisonous plants but distinguishes itself by hairy legs.

Rutin is found at local health food markets, also known as Vitamin P.

As contraceptive, it is taken in tablet, in doses of at least 500 mg daily for several days preceding and following ovulation, or when taken after fertilizing intercourse and continued until menstruation begins.

Neem (*Azadirachta indica* or *Melia azadirachta*) **oil** has also been found to prevent implantation used within 3 days of fertilizing intercourse.

Smartweed leaves (*Polygonum hydropiper*) contains rutin, quercetin and gallic acid, all of which interfere with normal pregnancy. An infusion can be prepared using 4 ounces of the

fresh leaves or one ounce of the dried leaves in a quart of boiled water. Drinking freely until menstrual bleeding begins. Smartweed may be used to prevent implantation after fertilizing intercourse, or to bring on a missed period. It is important not to carry the embryo after using this herb.



Smartweed leaves



& apricots

Apricot Kernels has anticancer qualities which treats the embryo as a foreign body. Eat 5-10 apricot kernels three times a day, starting immediately following fertilizing intercourse and continuing until menstruation comes.

Cotton root Bark has the effect of shutting down the corpus luteum's ability to produce progesterone that it produces until the pregnancy advances to the point where the placenta takes over hormone production.

12 teaspoons of the bark from the root per quart of water, 1-2 quarts of this tea per day.

10 drops of Tincture every 2 hours until bleeding is underway. 3½ ounce dried cotton root bark per quart of water for tea. Boil 20-30 minutes. Strain. Take 2 ounces every 1 hour.

For the Tincture 1-4 tsp every 30 min to 1 hour.

Rue (*Ruta graveolens*) has been used historically as tea to induce miscarriage. It contains two chemicals that we know have the ability to cause abortion: Philocarpine and Rutin. However, Rue is a very strong herb, stimulating the uterus and nervous system. It should be used with precautions because it may cause kidney irritation, liver degeneration and heart problems.



Dosages: Tea, 1-3 tsp. per cup, 3-4 times daily. Boil the water first then pour the boiled water over the dried herb. Do not boil the herb in water, as this destroys the herb's properties.

For a tincture, 5-15 drops 3-4 times a day.

Capsules, 1-4 size #0 capsules 3-4 times a day.

Take it as a tablet in doses of at least 500 mg daily for several days preceding and following ovulation, or take it after fertilizing intercourse and continue until the menstrual flow begins.

Vitamin C (*Ascorbic Acid*). If, after practicing withdrawal or a condom breaks during woman's fertile time, two tablets may be placed within the vagina next to the cervix to prevent conception.

The sperm needs an alkaline environment to survive and cannot survive in an acidic one.

Tablets can also be placed inside the vagina just before intercourse but it is not recommended because of the irritation. 1 or 2 500 mg tablets (non-chewable) placed inside the vagina is enough.

Vitamin C can be taken internally as an emergency contraceptive during the time between ovulation and when menstruation is expected. Apparently the ascorbic acid interferes with the production of progesterone.

Look for the synthetic form of vitamin C, it should contain no bioflavonoids, and should say in the ingredients ascorbic acid. dosage of 6 - 10 grams over the course of a 24 hour period for 5 to 10 days, not to exceed 10 days.

10-15 grams can be taken daily, at intervals throughout the day, from ovulation until menses to ensure menstrual flow.

However, taking mega doses of vitamin C is not safe beyond 10 days and may provoke side effects right away.

Quick reference to Latin Name of Plants

Herbs mentioned in this handbook

Achillea millefolium – Yarrow
Artemisia vulgaris – Mugwort
Calendula officinalis – Calendula
Caulophyllum thalictroides - Blue Cohosh
Chamaelirium luteum - False Unicorn Root
Cimicifuga racemosa - Black Cohosh
Gentiana spp. – Gentian
Hydrastis canadensis - Golden Seal
Hyssopus officinalis – Hyssop
Lavandula officinalis – Lavender
Leonurus cardiaca – Motherwort
Marrubium vulgare – Chamomile
Mentha piperita – Peppermint
Mentha pulegium – Pennyroyal
Petroselinum sativum – Parsley
Rosmarinus officinalis – Rosemary
Rubus idaeus – Raspberry
Salvia officinalis – Sage
Tanacetum parthenium – Feverfew
Tanacetum vulgare – Tansy
Thymus – Thyme
Tilia spp. – Linden
Trigonella foenum – Fenugreek
Valeriana officinalis – Valerian
Verbena officinalis – Vervain
Viburnum opulus - Cramp Bark
Vitex agnus-castis – Chasteberry
Zingiber officinale - Ginger
Queen Anne’s Lace Seeds
Juniper
Angelica
Savin

Rue
Asafetida
Celery
Birthwort
Horseradish
Qal
Pomegranate

Culinary herbs

Angelica - (*Angelica officinalis*)
Anise hyssop - (*Agastache foeniculum*)
Basil (*Ocimum basilicum*)
Bay leaf (*Laurus nobilis*)
Caper (*Capparis spinosa*)
Chervil (*Anthriscus cerefolium*)
Chives (*Allium schoenoprasum*)
Cilantro or Coriander (*Coriandrum sativum*)
Curry leaf (*Murraya koenigii*)
Dill (*Anethum graveolens*)
Fennel (*Foeniculum vulgare*)
Hyssop (*Hyssopus officinalis*)
Lavender (*Lavandula spp.*)
Lemon Balm (*Melissa officinalis*)
lemon grass (*Cymbopogon citratus*, *C. flexuosus*, and other species)
Lemon verbena (*Lippia citriodora*)
Lovage (*Levisticum officinale*)
Marjoram (*Origanum majorana*)
Mint (*Mentha spp.*)
Oregano (*Origanum vulgare*, *O. heracleoticum*, and other species)
Parsley (*Petroselinum crispum*)
Rosemary (*Rosmarinus officinalis*)
Sage (*Salvia officinalis*)
Savory (*Satureja hortensis*, *S. montana*)
Sorrel (*Rumex spp.*)
Tarragon (*Artemisia dracunculus*)

Thyme (*Thymus vulgaris*)

Medicinal herbs

Achillea millefolium-Yarrow

Crataegus- Hawthorn

Echinacea purpurea, Purple coneflower, and other species of
Echinacea

Symphytum officinale - Comfrey

Hypericum perforatum – St John's Wort

Marrubium vulgare – Honebound

Matricaria recutita (*Chamomilla recutita*) - Chamomile

Nepeta cataria - Catnip

Passiflora spp. – Passion-flower

Tanacetum parthenium (*Chrysanthemum parthenium*) - Feverfew

Taraxacum officinale - Dandelion

Valeriana officinalis - Valerian

Reference:

1. Glossary of Roots of Botanical Names:
2. <http://garden-gate.prairienet.org/botrts.htm>