



# FERTILITY

## Patient Information

### FACTS ABOUT INFERTILITY

- 1 in 6 Canadians across all communities experience infertility
- As the ovaries age, fertility declines. A person's best reproductive years are in their 20s. Fertility gradually declines in the 30s, particularly after age 35. The average age for menopause is 51, but most people become unable to have a successful pregnancy sometime in their mid-40s
- Infertility can cause a profound impact on one's mental health

### OPTIMIZING FERTILITY

- Start prenatal vitamins before attempting pregnancy
- Live a healthy lifestyle
- Aim for a healthy weight. Weighing too little or too much can result in fertility problems
- Smoking can decrease fertility and increase risk of miscarriage for those who smoke when pregnant, so smoking cessation is important
- Get timely treatment for STDs. If left untreated, can cause fertility issues
- Avoid using recreational drugs
- Avoid heavy caffeine consumption
- Do not drink more than 2 alcoholic drinks per day, and 7 in 1 week
- Avoid foods high in heavy metals such as deep sea fish
- Avoid lubricants (unless formulated for those trying to conceive)
- Make sure to wear proper protection if working with pesticides, chemicals, radiation and heavy metals

### CHANCE OF SUCCESS WHEN TRYING ON YOUR OWN

For those who have regular menstrual cycles, are less than 35 years of age, the chance of conception is between 20% and 37% by the end of the first 3 months. The chance of success increases to 80% by one year and 90% after two years of trying. Success rates decrease with age. The highest pregnancy rates are seen when a couple has intercourse every 1 to 2 days during the fertile window. There are many apps that can help to track the fertile window. There are also over the counter ovulation prediction kits. Some people rely on body cues such as increase in vaginal secretions or raised body temperature.

### WHO SHOULD SEEK MEDICAL HELP SOONER?

- Those who have irregular or no menstrual periods. If someone is on the birth control pill and has regular periods, the pill is regulating the periods. The way to assess if a person has regular periods is to monitor cycles when not on birth control
- Complicated medical or genetic history
- Always negative or always positive ovulation prediction test
- History of abdominal surgery
- Prior infertility
- Known problems with testicles or genitals
- Problems with ejaculation or erection