



DIET GUIDELINES FOR PRECONCEPTION & PREGNANCY

ALL FOODS SHOULD BE FRESH AND ORGANICALLY GROWN/FED WHENEVER POSSIBLE so food is higher in nutritional value and lower in toxins.

Individuals may have additional or different dietary needs - your Naturopath can advise. Also see additional information in *Natural Fertility* Chapter 12.& 13, and in *The Natural Way to.... Better Babies, A Better Pregnancy, Better Birth and Bonding or Better Breastfeeding.*)

PROTEIN

You need an average sized serving (equivalent to the palm of your hand) of protein-providing food **at least** 2x a day before conception and 3x a day during pregnancy. This should be food giving you either:

1. A **primary** protein, which comes from an **animal** source, and is a **complete** protein (i.e. one which contains all the amino acids).

or

2. A combination of **secondary** proteins, which come from a **plant** source, and are **incomplete** proteins (i.e. they do not contain the full range of amino acids).

By combining **two** of the food groups below (within one meal or one day), you will have a **complete** protein source, as each group has a different range. This is not necessary if you are also eating any foods of animal origin.

1. NUTS
2. GRAINS/SEEDS
3. LEGUMES/PULSES

FATS

You need to avoid saturated and trans fats, which will upset your **prostaglandin / hormone / nutrient** balance. This means heated and animal fats.

NO FRIED FOOD except stir-fry. Cook with minimal amount of olive oil (or sesame if using very high heat). These are mono-unsaturated fats, and will not saturate on heating.

USE LOTS OF COLD PRESSED OILS ON SALADS (extra virgin olive or flaxseed). These oils are high in beneficial essential fatty acids if never heated. They can be poured over food **after** cooking, and used on bread as a butter substitute. They should be kept out of light (in dark containers) & in the fridge (except olive). Add lemon/pepper/garlic/herbs to dressing.

AVOID BUTTER/MARGARINE. These are both saturated fats. Margarine is even worse than butter, as it saturates during processing and is also full of chemicals. Try hummus, tahini, nut spreads (all of these only if fresh, refrigerated & kept away from light), avocado & (banana).

N.B. "Nutella" is full of sugar & fat & peanut butter is very fatty (peanuts are legumes, not nuts).

(*) Prospective mothers should avoid unpasteurised goats' milk products or heat milk to 70° for 30 seconds.

PROTEIN PROVIDING FOODS

★ ★ ★ **FISH** – 3 times weekly. Low in saturated fats, high in essential fatty acids, especially deep sea/ocean/cold water fish, which are also less polluted. Avoid large fish e.g. tuna, shark (flake), stingray, barramundi, gemfish, orange roughy (deep sea perch), ling, king mackerel, catfish & billfish (broadbill, swordfish & marlin) (too high in mercury), crustaceans (often polluted) and raw fish (may contain bacteria). Fresh definitely preferable to tinned/frozen. Wild preferable to farmed (salmon & trout).

Ask your fishmonger for fish that are deep sea, not farmed, not too large – sardines are especially recommended.

★ ★ **POULTRY** – Trim the skin to avoid fats. Use **certified** organically fed **only** (free range is not necessarily organic and may still be fed with hormones and antibiotics).

★ ★ **EGGS** – are an excellent source of protein. Limit their consumption only if they cause gastro-intestinal problems such as gas or constipation or other allergy symptoms. **Certified** organically fed (see above).

★ **DAIRY** – Avoid cows' milk/cheese, as it is linked to endometriosis, creates mucus in tubes and malabsorption. Natural **cultured** non-flavoured yoghurt is good (unless hypersensitive to cows' milk). Goats' or sheep's milk/cheese preferred (*). Rice & oat milk also OK 'though not high in protein. Soy milk/cheese not recommended (especially avoid Genetically Engineered or high fat/ aluminium/sugar brands of soy). Avoid soft cheeses & those kept unsealed in water (which may contain bacteria).

★ **RED MEAT** – in moderation. Unless **certified** organically fed, avoid organ meats/offal/sausage/mince (or get the butcher to mince on site). Organ meats contain high levels of toxins, e.g. pesticides/hormones. Avoid delicatessen meats (high in fats, offal content and toxic preservatives) and raw/undercooked meat. Trim all fat.

★ ★ ★ **LEGUMES/PULSES** – Split peas, lentils, chickpeas (+ hummus), beans, (soy). (Fermented forms of soy eg tempeh, miso preferred, to avoid problems with protein and mineral absorption.) Good plant protein (also contain carbohydrate). Must combine as shown. Good detoxifiers.

★ ★ ★ **NUTS/SEEDS** – raw/unsalted/**fresh** (store in fridge, away from light and eat within 2 weeks or freeze. Nuts should **not** taste bitter). Use in stir-fries, salads, as a snack (also nut spreads, tahini). No dried fruit (high in sugar, and either preservatives or mould).

★ **GRAINS** – see over for grains (which have higher carbohydrate content than protein).

CARBOHYDRATES

Keep consumption to moderate levels and choose low glycaemic carbohydrates where possible (most non-starchy vegetables, pulses, whole (not refined) grains.) High glycaemic foods (eg. sugar, white/refined grains) can disrupt hormones. Refined carbohydrates also leach nutrients from your body's stores which, in turn, increases your desire for these foods. The balance of protein to carbohydrate foods should be approximately 1:1 in volume, though you can eat as much non-starchy vegetables as you like.

VEGETABLES – lots every day. Should make up minimum 40% of total food intake. Organic whenever possible. Wide variety, especially dark green leafy / red and orange / avocado. Eat both raw and cooked regularly.

RAW - Juices - try carrot/celery/beetroot as a base (great way of ensuring adequate vegetable intake).
- Salads - use a wide variety of vegetables. Pale lettuce is not highly nutritious. Add chopped fresh herbs e.g. parsley & watercress. Potatoes must not be eaten raw. Avoid pre-prepared salads (which may contain bacteria).

COOKED - steamed/stir-fried/dry baked). (Root vegetables require light cooking/grating/juicing for absorption). Discard green potatoes (toxic), and cut out the "eyes" or "scabs" on all root vegetables (can adversely affect foetus).

FRUIT - 2 - 3 pieces daily, maximum (because of high sugar content). This includes fruit that is juiced, (dilute 50/50) though better eaten whole. No dried fruit. Organic and low glycaemic whenever possible.

GRAINS - Whole grain bread/rice/pasta/pastry only and organic whenever possible. (Green pasta may be white with dye added). **Avoid refined flour products.** Read bread packets carefully and avoid those containing preservatives/additives. Grains provide limited protein compared to carbohydrate content.

SUGAR – avoid all sweet things (includes honey, sugar substitutes, undiluted fruit juices, cakes, biscuits, soft drinks and all additives ending in "-ose", eg sucrose, fructose, glucose, maltose, etc).

ALCOHOL - avoid. Foetal alcohol syndrome is traced to **pre**-conception, with **both** parents. Alcohol significantly lowers conception rates, is toxic to the foetus and leaches nutrients.

BEVERAGES

COFFEE - avoid. Related to fertility/pregnancy/foetal health problems, including miscarriage. Decaffeinated not recommended. Cereal based substitutes and Dandelion Root OK (check for added sugar).

TEA - 2 cups weak, naturally low caffeine (not decaffeinated) and 2 cups green tea max daily. Herb teas unlimited.

PURIFIED WATER - 8 - 12 glasses daily (or bottled). Mineral water OK occasionally. Unpurified tap water is high in many toxins and heavy metals which are concentrated, not destroyed, by boiling. Do not store in plastic.

SPICES/CONDIMENTS – Do not routinely add salt to your cooking/meals. If necessary, use sea/rock salt (to taste) on individual foods, sparingly. Pepper and spices are OK (unless you are sensitive to them). Avoid any sauces containing sugar/salt/additives.

ACID/ALKALI balance should be OK if you eat lots of vegetables and only moderate amounts of animal products and grains. See *Natural Fertility* or *The Natural Way to Better Babies* for more information.

PHYTO-OESTROGENS If suffering from endometriosis, fibroids or hormone imbalance, eat regular, moderate amounts of phyto-oestrogenic foods, e.g. soy (fermented forms preferred)/parsley/cucumber/whole grains and seeds/alfalfa/fennel.

"JUNK" FOODS - Avoid fats/sugars/salt/additives. Read labels carefully.

CIGARETTE SMOKING is harmful to your (and your baby's) health.

COOKING & STORING - Do not overcook or use microwave ovens for cooking or defrosting. Avoid soft plastic containers and cling-wrap, as they leach hormone disruptors into food that is hot, wet, fatty or acidic. Use stainless steel cookware.

FOR HELPFUL HINTS ON CHANGING FOOD HABITS – Get rid of all your unhealthy foods. Fill your cupboards with nutritious, delicious foods, especially for snacks – to prevent the sugar/carbohydrate "quick fix". Use your 2-3 pieces of fruit to substitute for other sugary foods you may be used to eating.

EXERCISE - a varied programme of regular low impact aerobic exercise minimum 30 minutes 3-4 times/week. Rebounding particularly beneficial for health of reproductive organs. Yoga also excellent for all aspects of reproductive health.

TO HELP MAKE POSITIVE CHOICES - try an affirmation such as:- 'I AM MAKING A POSITIVE CHOICE FOR MY HEALTH AND WELL BEING (AND THAT OF MY CHILD)'.

TO PRINT COPIES OF THIS SHEET FOR YOUR KITCHEN, GO TO www.fertility.com.au