



Food for conception

Eliseeva Tatyana, editor-in-chief of the EdaPlus.info project

Tkacheva Natalya, herbalist, nutritionist

E-mail: eliseeva.t@edaplus.info, tkacheva.n@edaplus.info

Abstract. Children are flowers of life. This is our joy and weakness. We love them immensely and dream about them endlessly. But we cannot always conceive. The most interesting thing is that the reasons for this often lie not so much in the health problems that women or men have, but in their diet. Moreover, in this case, to fulfill your cherished dream, you need very little: remove some products from it, replacing them with others.

Key words: food for conception, recommendations, benefits, harm, beneficial properties, contraindications

Food and conception

The influence of nutrition on the ability to conceive has been discussed in scientific circles relatively recently. Several years ago, specialists at Harvard University developed the so-called “**Fertility Diet**” and proved its effectiveness in practice. They conducted a study in which more than 17 thousand women of different ages took part. His results showed that the diet they created can reduce the risk of infertility due to ovulation disorders, which are most often its root cause, by 80%.

However, according to scientists, this nutritional system has a positive effect not only on women, but also on men. This is explained by the fact that all products, or rather the substances that they contain and enter the body, affect the reproductive system. Thus, the synthesis of hormones, for example, is carried out thanks to phytonutrients. And the protection of the egg and sperm from free radicals is provided by antioxidants.

The mechanism of how such a diet works using the example of women is described in detail by Jill Blackway, co-author of the book “**The 3-Month Program to Increase Fertility.**” She claims that during different phases of the cycle, different processes occur in a woman’s body associated with the synthesis of certain hormones. Therefore, “if a woman wants to increase her chances of pregnancy, she needs to eat those foods that her body needs at one time or another.” In other words, during menstruation she needs to consume more iron, during the follicular phase - phytonutrients and vitamin E, and during ovulation - zinc, omega-3 fatty acids, vitamins B and C.

It is worth noting that, unlike others, the fertility diet has received the approval of many scientists and doctors. And all because it does not provide for any dietary restrictions; on the contrary, it recommends diversifying it as much as possible with healthy foods. Moreover, there should be not just enough of them, but really a lot of them in the diet. In the end, nature “programmed” a person in such a way that during famine he would not be able to produce children, but in conditions of abundance he would enjoy his offspring to the fullest.

Useful substances for conception

The Fertility Diet says: Do you want to get pregnant? Eat everything and more. However, we should not forget that men and women are different. Different processes take place in their bodies, and different hormones are synthesized in different quantities. That is why they need different vitamins and microelements to conceive.

What do women need?

Iron – it directly affects the menstrual cycle. Its deficiency, at best, can cause anemia, in which the uterus and ovaries do not receive enough oxygen, which negatively affects their functionality, and at worst, it can lead to a lack of ovulation. The same one that is considered the root cause of female infertility. [1]

Zinc – it is responsible for maintaining optimal levels of estrogen and progesterone and ensuring timely maturation of the egg. [2]

Folic acid – it takes part in the formation of red blood cells and prevents the development of anemia. Moreover, doctors advise using it not only before pregnancy, but also during it, in order to exclude the occurrence of pathologies of the fetal nervous system. [3]

Vitamin E - it normalizes the synthesis of sex hormones and the level of insulin in the blood, prepares the uterine mucosa for implantation of a fertilized egg, stabilizes hormonal levels and promotes the onset of ovulation. [4]

Vitamin C is a powerful antioxidant that protects cells from free radicals and minimizes the negative effects of stress on the body. [5]

Manganese - it's hard to believe, but it improves the secretion of glands, on which the process of formation of the maternal instinct depends. [6]

Omega-3 fatty acids – increase the chances of pregnancy by increasing uterine blood flow. During pregnancy, they minimize the risk of premature birth and promote the growth and development of the fetus. [7]

What do men need?

Zinc is a natural stimulant of the immune system, which also affects the quantity and quality of sperm (including their motility), and also takes part in the process of their formation. In addition, it promotes the synthesis of sex hormones and is responsible for cell division.

Selenium – improves sperm motility and increases their number, and also takes part in the process of testosterone synthesis. According to doctors, it is the lack of this microelement in the male body that can cause a miscarriage in a woman or congenital defects in the fetus. [8]

Vitamin B12 - increases the concentration and motility of sperm - a fact proven experimentally by Japanese researchers from Yamaguchi University. [9]

Vitamin C – prevents sperm from sticking together, or agglutination – one of the main causes of male infertility.

Omega-3 fatty acids are responsible for the synthesis of prostaglandins, the deficiency of which leads to a decrease in sperm quality.

L-carnitine is one of the popular fat burners and, in combination, a means to improve the quality and quantity of sperm.

Top 20 products for conception

1. Eggs are a source of vitamin B12, D and protein - these and other micro- and macroelements are responsible for the process of formation of new cells and the synthesis of sex hormones in representatives of both sexes.
2. Nuts and seeds – These contain omega-3 fatty acids, zinc, vitamin E and protein [10], which improve sperm quality in men and stabilize hormonal levels in women.
3. Spinach is a source of iron, protein, carotene, organic acids, antioxidants [11], vitamins and minerals that directly affect the ability to conceive. In addition to it, other dark green leafy vegetables have the same properties. [12]
4. Beets - they contain iron, which takes part in the processes of hematopoiesis and promotes the onset of ovulation in women. [13]
5. Lentils – they contain essential amino acids. However, it should be consumed simply because it is one of the few environmentally friendly products that are not capable of accumulating toxic substances. [14]
6. Almonds are a source of vitamins B and E, as well as vegetable fats, which help normalize hormonal levels in women. In addition, it contains copper, phosphorus, iron, potassium and protein, which are essential for men.
7. Olive oil contains a huge amount of useful substances and promotes their absorption. You can replace it with olives.
8. Avocado is a source of oleic acid, which normalizes cholesterol levels in the blood. [15]
9. Broccoli – it contains vitamin C, zinc, selenium, phosphorus and beta-carotene, which promote conception. [16,17]
10. Berries are a source of vitamins B, C and A, as well as a number of microelements that have a positive effect on the functioning of the reproductive system.
11. Yogurt – contains vitamins D, B12, zinc and a huge amount of protein. Among other things, it improves digestion and absorption of nutrients. [18]
12. Liver - it contains vitamin D, zinc, selenium, folic acid, iron and vitamin B12 - all those substances that directly affect the ability to conceive.
13. Oysters are a source of zinc, which has a huge effect on the immune and reproductive systems. You can replace them with any other seafood.
14. Honey is a product that contains a maximum of useful substances and is also a powerful aphrodisiac. [19]
15. Salmon is a source of vitamin D, omega-3 fatty acids, selenium, zinc and vitamin B12, which improve sperm quality in men and hormone synthesis in women. Other types of fish are also suitable instead.
16. Legumes are ideal foods for enriching the body with iron, protein and folic acid.
17. Buckwheat and other cereals are complex carbohydrates that give the body energy and normalize blood sugar levels. The latter, by the way, can cause hormonal disorders in women.
18. Pineapple is a source of manganese. [20]

19. Garlic – it contains selenium and other substances that increase the chances of pregnancy and help maintain it in the future. [21]
20. Turmeric is a source of antioxidants. [22]

What can hinder conception?

- **Sweet and starchy foods** – they increase blood sugar levels, thereby causing hormonal imbalances.
- **Coffee and drinks with high caffeine content** – research shows that these also lead to hormonal imbalances in women and contribute to the development of anovulation.
- **Soy products** are equally dangerous for both women and men, since they contain isoflavones, which are weak estrogens and can cause hormonal disorders.
- **GMO products** – they negatively affect the quality of male sperm.
- **Low-fat foods** - do not forget that the body needs healthy fats, since it is with their help that hormones are synthesized. Therefore, you should not abuse them.

And finally, **the wrong lifestyle.**

Despite the fact that **the fertility diet** does not provide a 100% guarantee of success, it is becoming more and more popular every year. Simply because it allows you to improve your body health before pregnancy and make an invaluable contribution to the health of your unborn baby. Whether you listen to her recommendations or not is up to you! But, according to experts, it's still worth trying to change your life for the better with its help!

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Tkacheva Natalia, phytotherapist, nutritionist

E-mail: eliseeva.t@edaplust.info, tkacheva.n@edaplust.info

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