

Top 10 baby making tips

For many women, the decision to start a family comes after years of actively preventing pregnancy. So, it can be a bit of a surprise to discover that the human reproductive system is not all that efficient.

Sometimes the journey to parenthood can take longer than you hoped and one in six couples will face some kind of fertility problem. But not all of those couples will require fertility treatment and there are steps you can take straight away to try to boost your chances of conceiving.

Here, Genea share their top ten baby making tips.

1 **Don't leave it too late!** Women are born with all their eggs and they decline in both quantity and quality over time. As a result, the chance of a woman conceiving drops sharply in the late 30s to early 40s.

2 **Formulate a good diet and exercise routine.** Women have a higher chance of conception when they are in a normal body mass index range and if either partner is overweight or obese, the chances of pregnancy are reduced considerably. In both men and women a BMI of 18.5-24.9 is considered normal.

3 **Take appropriate preconception supplements.** All women trying to conceive should take supplemental folic acid (folate) to ensure the best chance of a healthy pregnancy. Some women are also deficient in Vitamin D and iodine.

4 **Try to have sex about every other day,** particularly leading up to the middle of your cycle.

5 **Know your cycle.** Women with 28 day menstrual cycles usually ovulate midway between their menses – about 14 days after the start of their period. There are various simple methods of determining when you ovulate. This is the time – and slightly earlier – that's best to have unprotected sex.

6 **Don't smoke and cut back alcohol and caffeine consumption.** Smoking is toxic to human eggs and has long lasting negative effects even after a woman stops.

7 **Make sure your other half is also well and healthy,** is not smoking and also reducing alcohol intake. It takes two to tango.

8 **Remember that your friends** and even your mother are not necessarily fertility experts despite their personal experiences. Their advice might be well meaning, but not necessarily accurate.

9 **Make a plan.** Many people who have fertility treatment say the best advice they'd give is to seek help earlier. If you're under 35, it's well accepted that 12 months of trying without success, or 6 months if you're over 35, is an indication that things aren't working quite as they should be.

10 **Live a normal and happy life.** There is no evidence that you need to reduce normal levels of exercise or somehow wrap yourself in cotton wool while you are trying to conceive.