

[IMAGE]

The Fertility Booster

By Editorial Staff

If you're struggling to conceive a child with your partner, listen up: what you eat (or don't eat) could make a big difference. So before you turn to fertility drugs, hormone therapy or in-vitro fertilization (IVF), learn how the Mediterranean diet can increase your chances of conception – *naturally*.

The Mediterranean diet emphasizes whole grains, vegetables, beans, nuts and seeds, olive oil and fish. It's high in plant-based foods commonly eaten by people who live near the Mediterranean Sea. *Not* part of the Mediterranean diet: red meat, refined grains, processed foods, butter and refined / processed oils. Previous research links those types of foods with increased inflammation, which can negatively influence fertility.

According to a new study, "[A]dherence to anti-inflammatory diets such as the Mediterranean diet (specifically, increased intake of monounsaturated and n-3 polyunsaturated fatty acids, flavonoids, and reduced intake of red and processed meat) improves fertility, assisted reproductive technology (ART) success, and sperm quality." Findings appear in the journal *Nutrients* and are based on a review of the existing research on the topic.

Infertility (failure to conceive after more than one year of unprotected intercourse) is a global problem, affecting an estimated 48 million couples and 186 million individuals, according to the researchers. If adopting the Mediterranean diet can make you and/or your partner more fertile – *and* increase your overall health in numerous ways, as suggested by previous research (lower risk of cardiovascular disease, obesity, type 2 diabetes, etc.), what do you stand to lose? Talk to your doctor to learn more.

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