

# The naturopathic advisor



**Natural Lifestyle has teamed up with experts at CNM (College of Naturopathic Medicine) to answer some of your burning health questions. This issue, you asked:**



## **Q** I'd like to support my fertility – can diet help?

Optimal fertility of both parents, particularly the future mother, is highly dependent on a good, varied diet. It's from the foods you eat that tissues, hormones, organs, sperm and eggs are made, so you'd certainly want to aim for the best quality of building materials.

● **Eat that rainbow:** If nutrients are missing, conception can be hindered. Fruit and veg offer vitamins, minerals and good sugars, essential fats, antioxidants, other micronutrients and extra hydration you and your

partner need. Shop for seasonal, local, preferably organic, unprocessed produce and happily eat a rainbow; the more colourful the veggies and fruit you consume, the higher the chances of yourself and your future offspring having the best building blocks in life. Aim for eight portions of vegetables (excluding starchy ones, like potatoes) and two portions of fruit per day.

● **Love your carbs:** Minimally processed, unrefined carbohydrates offer the body a source of constant energy. Choose non-starchy vegetables and avoid 'beige' foods, such as white bread, pasta, rice, biscuits, cakes and crisps.

● **Feast on fats and proteins:** Hormonal health requires nutrients found in proteins and fats, two food groups rich in fat-soluble vitamins A, D, E and K, B vitamins and a wealth of minerals, all needed for nerve, joint, muscle, hormone and brain health for you and the developing foetus.

Try some or all of the following: Cold pressed plant oils (raw, unprocessed olive oil, flaxseed oil, etc.) drizzled over meals or added in smoothies; avocados, butter, ghee, eggs, meat, offal and fat from grass-fed cattle; organic poultry and wild caught or organic fish; saturated plant fats, such as coconut oil and omega 3s in oily fish (anchovies, sardines, salmon); raw nuts and seeds. Remember that good quality proteins and fats are vital for hormones which support and promote fertility, including those produced by the thyroid gland, as well as insulin.

● **Drink:** Good hydration supports all body functions, so drink filtered water.

● **Become a picky eater:** You may have heard about 'bad fats'; these prevent the uptake of good fats and create problems for fertility. They include trans-fats, oxidised fats and hydrogenated fats. Many processed foods contain hydrogenated fats;

trans-fat occur mainly when oils get heated to high temperatures, whether commercially or in your kitchen, and oxidation occurs when fats and oils are stored improperly and are allowed to deteriorate as a result.

Optimal fertility is also helped by not consuming anti-nutrients. Anti-nutrients provide no nourishment, reduce or even prevent fertility and use up precious nutrient reserves just to process them. They include food colourings, preservatives, refined sugars, sweeteners, caffeine, alcohol, nicotine, fizzy drinks and even fresh foods which have been sprayed with pesticides and chemicals.

**YOUR EXPERT**  
Your question has been answered by Elle Fox, Naturopath and CNM graduate. CNM trains students for successful careers in a range of natural health therapies, in class and online. Call 01342 410505 or visit [www.naturopathy-uk.com](http://www.naturopathy-uk.com)

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