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FOOD SCIENCE AND NUTRITION

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In order to increase your chances of conceiving naturally, you should think about improving your diet by increasing nutrients such as zinc in nuts and seeds, essential fats in oily fish as well as cutting out alcohol and nutrient deficient foods such as Coke and sweets. This rids your body of any unwanted toxins that could affect the health of the egg, and also corrects any hormonal imbalances that could prevent you from conceiving. A foetus is created from 50% egg and 50% sperm so the health of the sperm is of equal importance. Therefore it is also important for the man's diet to be nutritionally balanced without high levels of alcohol to make sure sperm count isn't lowered. Women nowadays are having children later on in life and therefore it is often harder to conceive. Women having babies in their late 30s has more than doubled from 45.2 births to 114.3 births per 1000. The number of women having babies after the age 40 has also doubled since 1971, from 12.7 to 27 in 1000 births. It is important to optimise the chance of conception hence why eating the right foods and cutting out bad substances is vital.

DO's

FRUIT AND VEG

Fruits and vegetables not only deliver a wealth of vitamins and minerals, they're also overflowing with free-radical-busting micro nutrients, like phytochemicals and antioxidants. (Free radicals are harmful molecules that sneak into the body on the heels of everything from sunlight to car exhaust and can damage the ova, sperm, and reproductive organs)

OMEGA 3

Oily fish and shellfish have essential fats called omega-3 fatty acids, which your body needs for optimal fertility - and seafood is the best source. Can also be found in nuts and seeds
Omega-3s are important for a baby's brain and eye development and have many other pregnancy-related benefits, including lowering your risk of preterm birth, reducing your chance of



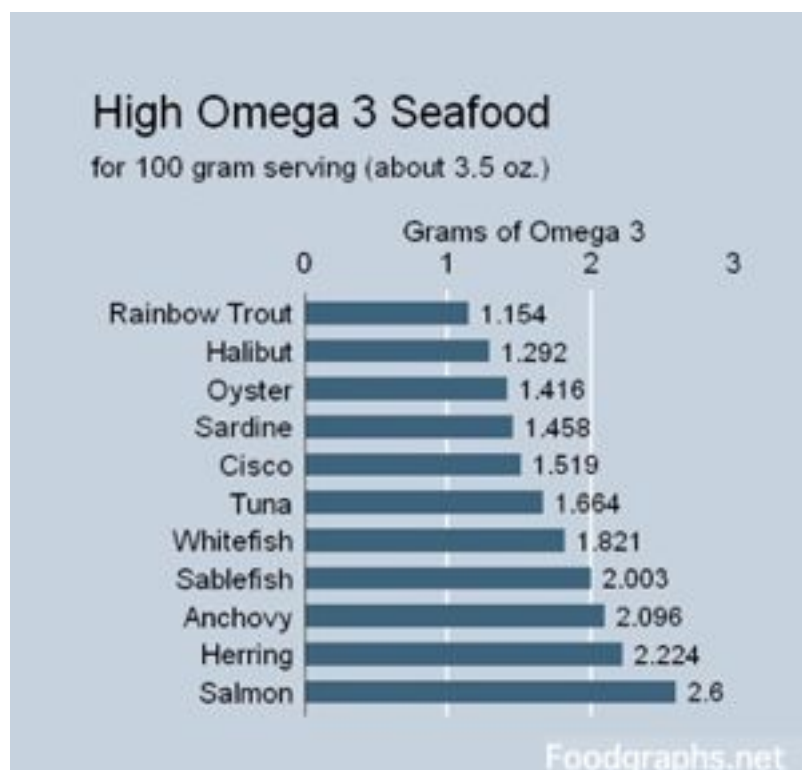
FOOD SCIENCE

How will these foods help you?

Goats Cheese is a very good source of calcium. Calcium is best known for its role in maintaining strength and density of bones.

Salmon as well as being a rich dietary sources of vitamin D, is an excellent source of protein and rich in beneficial fish oils, known as omega 3 fatty acids. Protein contains amino acids and is necessary in the diet for muscle growth and maintenance. The beneficial fish oils help to regulate and reduce inflammation in the body. In addition, salmon is rich in vitamins and minerals which are essential for optimum health. Salmon is a good source of phosphorous, selenium and vitamin B12. Phosphorous is important for healthy bones and teeth, as well as good kidney function. Vitamin B12 is essential for nerve function, DNA synthesis and energy metabolism. Whilst selenium is a potent

preeclampsia, and easing depression. It's important to get omega-3 fatty acids from food because your body doesn't make them.



IRON

Load up now, because once you're expecting, your body has difficulty maintaining its iron stores as your baby takes the mineral from you. Too little iron at the start of pregnancy puts you at risk for postpartum anemia – a condition affecting new mums that causes your red blood cells to fall below normal and drains your energy level. Can be found in dark leafy vegetables, lentils and other beans.

WATCH OUT FOR LISTERIA

Listeria is a harmful bacterium found in ready-to-eat meats, soft cheeses, and unpasteurized dairy products. Pregnant women are 20 times more likely than other healthy adults to get sick from eating listeria-laced food. Those trying to conceive should also be on alert because listeriosis (the infection caused by listeria) can cause a miscarriage early in the first trimester - possibly before you even know you're pregnant. To kill listeria, heat high-risk foods in the microwave until they're steaming hot.. Toss any food that's been at room temperature for more than two hours. Foods to avoid completely: Raw sushi, refrigerated smoked seafood, refrigerated pâté or meat spreads (canned or shelf-stable spreads are safe to eat), soft cheese made from unpasteurized (raw) milk, and other unpasteurized dairy products.

VITAMIN D

Vitamin D is needed to help the body create sex hormones which in turn affects ovulation and hormonal balance. Yale University School of Medicine conducted a study of 67 infertile women, where it was discovered that a mere 7% had normal Vitamin D levels. Found in eggs.

antioxidant.

Beef contains zinc is a component of DNA and RNA. These are essential for growth and controlling hormones that are messengers to organs such as the testes and ovaries and promote a healthy nervous system and brain in the growing fetus.

Spinach is high in folic acid and this is critical during pregnancy for the development of brain nerves. It is always essential for brain and nerve function and again for bringing down the risk of high homocysteine.

Butternut Squash contains vitamin B6. This is essential for brain function, hormone production and especially helps to balance sex hormones. It helps to limit the build up of homocysteine which when high causes inflammation and can negatively affect the pregnancy and the unborn fetus.

Diana regularly provides talks for various groups and has spoken on key issues at UK and international health conferences, please view www.dianawright.co.uk/about.html for more detailed information.

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ZINC

Without zinc, your cells can not divide properly; your oestrogen and progesterone levels can get out of balance and your reproductive system fully function. Low levels of zinc have been directly linked to miscarriage in early stages of a pregnancy, according to The Centers for Disease Control's Assisted Reproductive Technology Report. Found in nuts, seeds, fish.

DONT's

ALCOHOL

Although studies of alcohol's effects on fertility are inconclusive, some do show a slight link between drinking and difficulty conceiving. The American Society for Reproductive Medicine recommends that if you do drink, have no more than two drinks a day if you're trying to get pregnant.

CAFFEINE

The American Pregnancy Association says that caffeine can hinder your body's ability to absorb iron and calcium which are required when expecting a baby

TOO MUCH MEAT

Experts at Harvard Medical School say that replacing a serving of meat each day with vegetable or dairy protein such as beans, peas, soybeans or tofu, or nuts can boost fertility.

TOO MUCH VITAMIN A

Make sure you don't have more than the daily recommended dose of vitamin A, unless it's all in a form called beta-carotene. Getting too much of a certain kind of vitamin A can cause birth defects. (The kind that occurs naturally in food is safe, so you don't have to worry about overdoing it by eating foods rich in vitamin A.)

SOY FOODS

Soy foods have been shown to contain oestrogen mimicking properties. It is best to avoid processed soy foods such as soy milk, soy burgers, soy protein powder, soy chips, soy meats, and soy cheeses to avoid a negative impact on your hormonal balance. If you have hypothyroidism, avoid soy completely.

FAT FREE FOODS

Foods which are altered to be reduced in fat or fat-free are highly processed and high in sugar. When choosing foods always chose the foods as nature intended. Full fat dairy is one example that was shown in a study by Harvard to increase fertility over the fat-reduced options. Again, fat is what our bodies need to produce hormones.



Grilled Salmon & Courgette with Red Pepper Sauce

(serves 4) - *high in omega 3, vitamin D & zinc*

Ingredients

- 1/3 cup sliced almonds, toasted
- 1/4 cup chopped jarred roasted red peppers
- 1/4 cup halved cherry tomatoes
- 1 small clove garlic
- 1 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 tablespoon red-wine vinegar
- 1 teaspoon paprika, preferably smoked
- 3/4 teaspoon salt, divided
- 1/2 teaspoon freshly ground pepper, divided
- 1 1/4 pounds wild-caught salmon fillet , skinned and cut crosswise into 4 portions
- 2 medium courgette , or summer squash (or 1 of each), halved lengthwise
- Olive oil cooking spray
- 1 tablespoon chopped fresh parsley , for garnish

Method

- Preheat grill to medium.
- Process almonds, peppers, tomatoes, garlic, oil, vinegar, paprika, 1/4 teaspoon salt and 1/4 teaspoon pepper in a food processor or blender until smooth; set aside.
- Coat salmon and courgette (and/or summer squash) on both sides with cooking spray, and then sprinkle with the remaining 1/2 teaspoon salt and 1/4 teaspoon pepper. Grill, turning once, until the salmon is just cooked through and the courgette is soft and browned, about 3 mins per side.
- Transfer the courgette to a clean cutting board. When cool enough to handle, slice

into 1/2-inch pieces. Toss in a bowl with half of the reserved sauce. Divide the courgette among 4 plates along with a piece of salmon topped with some of the remaining sauce. Garnish with parsley, if desired.



Tofu and Spinach Cannelloni (serves 6) - *high in iron*

Ingredients

2 tbsp olive oil
1 onion, chopped
3 garlic cloves, finely chopped
2 x 400g cans chopped tomatoes
50g pine nuts, roughly chopped
400g bag spinach
Pinch grated nutmeg
349g pack silken tofu
300g pack fresh lasagne sheets
4 tbsp fresh breadcrumbs

Method

- Heat half the oil in a pan, add onion and 1/3 of the garlic and fry for 4 mins until softened. Pour in tomatoes, season and bring to the boil. Reduce heat and cook for 10 mins until sauce thickens.
- Heat half remaining oil in a frying pan and cook another 1/3 of garlic for 1 min, then add half the pine nuts and the spinach. Wilt spinach, then tip out excess liquid. Whizz tofu in a food processor or with a hand blender until smooth, then stir through the spinach with the nutmeg and some pepper. Remove from the heat; allow to cool slightly.

- Heat oven to 200C/180C fan/gas 6. Pour half tomato sauce into a 20 x 30cm dish. Divide spinach mix between lasagne sheets, roll up and lay on top of sauce. Pour over remaining sauce. Bake for 30 mins.
- Mix crumbs with remaining garlic and pine nuts. Sprinkle over top of dish, drizzle with remaining oil and bake for 10 mins until crumbs are golden.



Red Pepper And Goats Cheese Frittata
(serves 6) - *high in vitamin D*

Ingredients

- 8 eggs
- 2 tablespoons finely chopped fresh oregano
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon freshly ground pepper
- 2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 cup sliced red bell pepper
- 1 bunch scallions, trimmed and sliced
- 1/2 cup crumbled goat cheese

Method

- Position rack in upper third of oven; preheat broiler.
- Whisk eggs, oregano, salt and pepper in a medium bowl. Heat oil in a large, ovenproof, non-stick skillet over medium heat. Add bell pepper and scallions and cook, stirring constantly, until the scallions are just wilted, 30 seconds to 1 min.
- Pour the egg mixture over the vegetables and cook, lifting the edges of the frittata to allow the uncooked egg to flow underneath, until the bottom is light golden, 2 to 3 mins.

Dot the top of the frittata with cheese, transfer the pan to the oven and broil until puffy and lightly golden on top, 2 to 3 mins. Let rest for about 3 mins before serving. Serve hot or cold.



Beef chilli

(serves 8) - *high in zinc and iron*

Ingredients

2 pounds lean ground beef
1/3 cup Chili Seasoning Mix
2 (14.5 oz) cans diced tomatoes with green pepper, celery, and onion
2 (8 oz) cans tomato sauce
1 (16 oz) can black beans, undrained
1 (15.5 oz) can small red beans, undrained

Method

- Brown beef in a Dutch oven over medium-high heat, stirring often, 4 to 5 mins or until beef crumbles and is no longer pink; drain well. Return beef to Dutch oven; sprinkle evenly with seasoning, mix and sauté 1 min over medium-high heat.
- Stir in diced tomatoes and remaining ingredients; bring to a boil over medium-high heat, stirring occasionally. Cover; reduce heat to low, and simmer, stirring occasionally, 15 mins.

It takes us 4 hours to wake up apparently!
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