

What is infertility?

Infertility is defined as not being able to get pregnant (conceive) after one year (or longer) of unprotected sex.

When pregnancy happens?

Pregnancy is the result of a process that has many steps. To get pregnant:

1. A woman's body must release an egg from one of her ovaries
2. A man's sperm must join with the egg along the way (fertilize)
3. The fertilized egg must go through a fallopian tube towards the uterus (womb)
4. The embryo must attach to the inside of the uterus (implantation)

What causes infertility in women?

Women need functioning ovaries, fallopian tube and a uterus to get pregnant. Conditions affecting any one of these organs can contribute to female infertility. Some of these conditions are listed below:

- **Disruption of ovarian function**
(Anovulation due to Polycystic Ovarian Syndrome, Diminished Ovarian Reserve, Functional Hypothalamic Amenorrhea, Reduced function of Hypothalamus and Pituitary gland)
- **Fallopian tube obstruction**
(Endometriosis, Pelvic Infection, Gonorrhoea, etc)

What increases women's risk of infertility?

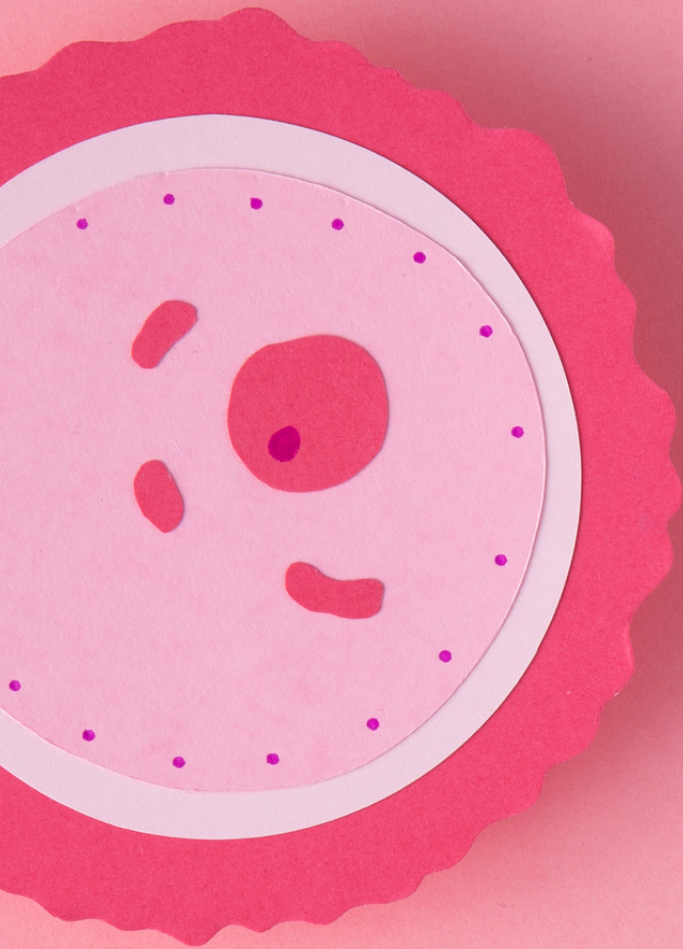
- Couples in which female partner is more than 30 years old
- Extreme weight gain or loss
- Being overweight or obese
- Excessive physical or emotional stress

What causes infertility in men?

- Varicocele (results in low sperm count)
- Trauma to the testes (results in low sperm count)
- Cancer treatment
- Diabetes mellitus
- Cystic fibrosis
- Autoimmune disorders

What increases a man's risk of infertility?

- Couples in which male partner is more than 40 years old
- Being overweight or obese
- Smoking
- Excessive alcohol and drug use
- Exposure to testosterone (for increasing muscle mass)
- Exposure to radiations
- Frequent exposure of the testes to high temperatures (those confined to wheel chair)
- Exposure to certain medications (Cimetidine, Ketoconazole, Spironolactone, etc)
- Exposure to pesticides (Lead, Mercury, etc)



How long should couples try to get pregnant before seeing a doctor?

A woman's chances of having a baby decrease rapidly every year after the age of 30. Any women more than age 30 with no apparent health or infertility problems and regular menstrual cycles should try to conceive for at least one year before seeing a doctor.



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