

There are many ways that both **men** and **women** can get fit for their future family. The good news is that there is plenty of information to support you.

Did you know obesity, smoking and too much alcohol can affect fertility in both **men** and **women**?

This leaflet will signpost you to useful information you may need when trying to conceive.

Planning ahead

Folic acid

Folic acid tablets should be taken two to three months before conception to protect against problems with the baby's brain or spinal cord.

Contraception

Some methods of contraception can affect fertility for some time after stopping. If you are thinking about planning a family, talk to your doctor for more advice.

Your health

If you have any pre-existing medical issues, especially if you are on medications, speak to your GP before trying to conceive.

Further info: www.tommys.org/pregnancy

www.sexualhealthoxfordshire.nhs.uk/contraception/planning-a-pregnancy

www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/familyfit

Local support

Obesity

Helpful weight loss advice

www.achieveoxfordshire.org.uk

Help getting Active

www.oxspa.co.uk

Weight loss group for men

www.manvfat.com

Start your weight loss journey

www.nhs.uk/common-health-questions/pregnancy/how-can-i-increase-my-chances-of-getting-pregnant

Smoking

Helping you to stop smoking

www.smokefreelifeoxfordshire.co.uk

Alcohol

Help and advice on drugs and alcohol

www.wellbeing.turning-point.co.uk/oxfordshire

Emotional Support

Mental Wellbeing Advice

www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/mentalwellbeing

Mental Health advice

www.oxfordshiremind.org.uk

Getting fit for a family



Shaping up for fertility,
pregnancy and beyond...

Obesity

Being overweight can affect fertility in men and women. Bringing down your weight before planning a baby can reduce risks and increase your chances of conceiving.

- Reduced fertility in men and women
- Increased risk of miscarriage, gestational diabetes and complications in pregnancy and birth
- Increased risk of stillbirth, and foetal metabolic and developmental abnormalities
- Increased risk of obesity and diabetes in children



Smoking

Quitting smoking altogether is the best thing you can do. Quitting could reduce the time it takes you or your partner to become pregnant and is important for creating a smoke-free home for any new baby.

- Reduced fertility in men and women
- Increased risk of miscarriage, maternal deep vein thrombosis and complications in pregnancy and birth
- Increased risk of stillbirth, low birth weight and foetal abnormalities
- Increased risk of sudden infant death syndrome and breathing problems in babies



Alcohol use

Alcohol crosses the placenta and there is no known safe level of alcohol to drink during pregnancy. Too much alcohol can also affect sperm quality, which can delay conception. The more you drink the bigger the risks. So, try to reduce your drinking if you are a heavy drinker or get drunk regularly.

- Reduced fertility in men and women
- Increased risk of miscarriage and premature birth
- Increased risk of stillbirth, low birth weight and foetal abnormalities
- Increased risk of learning difficulties and behavioural problems in children



Mental wellbeing

Your mental wellbeing in pregnancy is just as important as your physical health and shouldn't be ignored. There are some things you can do to help take care of your emotional health as you try to conceive, including being active/exercising, eating well, talking to someone you feel you can trust, and finding ways to relax.

- Pregnancy can impact on existing mental health problems'
- Post natal depression in men and women
- Impacts on the healthy development of babies and children