

How can I improve my sperm count?

Fertility can be affected by age, occupation, weight and nutrition, and drug use (including smoking and prescription drugs)

SMOKING - Smoking in men can decrease semen volume, total sperm count, motility and normal morphology, and increase DNA damage. The capacity for sperm to fertilise an egg is also reduced.



HEAT - Jacuzzi, hot baths, working in a hot environment or tight underwear can increase testicular temperature negatively affecting sperm production.



ALCOHOL - It is advisable that you consume no more than the recommended weekly intake of alcohol (14 units/week). Alcohol intake has been shown to impact heavily on sperm motility and morphology, and decrease sperm count.

DRUGS -

Marijuana and cocaine reduce sperm production and testosterone levels.

Anabolic steroids impair sperm production and can cause hypogonadism.

Some prescription drugs can also affect sperm parameters. It is beneficial to let your GP know you are trying to conceive, so that they may advise you on the best course of action.



EXERCISE - We advise at least 2 periods exercise of 30 minutes per week. Too much vigorous exercise may be detrimental.



WEIGHT - We suggest maintaining a healthy weight (having a BMI between 20-25 kg/m²), since reduced semen quality is more likely with obese men, and sperm concentration is reduced in underweight men.

NUTRITION - Having a healthy, balanced diet is recommended, particularly abundant in fruit and vegetables.

Hormone regulation (testosterone);

- Vitamin B6 - tuna, pistachio nuts, spinach

Cell division;

- Vitamin B12 - cheese, eggs, salmon
- Folate- broccoli, chickpeas, brown rice
- Iron- meat, cabbage, spinach
- Magnesium- brown rice, wholegrain bread, nuts
- Zinc - shellfish, milk, meat

Normal sperm production;

- Vitamin D - salmon, eggs, mackerel
- Omega 3&6 - oily fish, sesame seeds, flaxseed oil

Reduce sperm DNA damage;

- Antioxidants - asparagus, walnuts, ginger



Sperm production takes approximately 3 months, so any lifestyle changes you make may not alter sperm quality for a few months.

References:

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