

# Natural

NUTRITION  N

Tailormade **Nutrition & Lifestyle Advice**



**Natural Nutrition.  
Conceiving by  
design, not chance.**

It seems incredible that you  
can improve fertility in just, 90  
days

**By Melody Mackeown Dip.ION**

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## Welcome to UrBump

Hi my name is Melody Mackeown. I am a member of the British Association of Nutritional Therapists (BANT) and Foresight, the Association for the promotion of pre-conceptual care. I graduated with Distinction from London's Institute for Optimum Nutrition (ION), and I specialise in pre-conceptual care, pregnancy and post natal health.

*“Having recently had a baby myself, I became increasingly aware of the importance that nutrition and lifestyle can have upon the ability to conceive, pregnancy and birth experience as well as the postnatal health of mother and baby.”*

My aim is to help you uncover why you have been unable to conceive or are having a difficult pregnancy by helping you establish the connection between your diet, lifestyle and health.

Optimising your diet and making the right lifestyle choices may do much to help you have a problem free pregnancy, and to avoid a miscarriage as well as preventing many post-natal problems such as post-natal depression - which affects at least 1 in 10 mothers - and problems with breastfeeding (such as insufficient milk).

You have made a very wise decision downloading this e-book. People rarely think that what they eat may be contributing to their infertility, but it is the nutrients in our food that is key to promoting optimum health, optimum fertility, and the future health of our children.

We normally think of conception as the beginning of life when the sperm and egg combine, but it takes your bodies 3 months to prepare the egg and sperm. As a result of this, the health of your baby is dependent upon your diet for at least 3 months before conception – as that is how long it takes the testes to make healthy sperm, and the ovary to make a healthy egg.

Consequently, it is likely to take at least 3 months as this is the length of time your body needs to make good quality eggs and sperm. There are many reasons why you may not be able to become pregnant and many of these are temporary which means that a diagnosis of infertility does not necessarily mean that you will always be infertile. In this E-book we are going to explore how making small changes to your diet and lifestyle can increase your fertility.

## Ten dietary factors that improve Fertility

There are a range of dietary measures that can be taken in order to improve your fertility. Some of the key recommendations are listed below.

1. Eat unprocessed, unrefined foods to obtain the maximum amount of nutrients. Your reproductive system is dependant on an optimal intake of vitamins and minerals. For example, Zinc and B vitamins (e.g. B1, B2, B6, B12, Folic acid) are important in proper hormone functioning.
2. Increase Essential Fats. Like Zinc and the B vitamins, Omega 3 and 6 fats are needed for healthy hormone functioning, so a deficiency is likely to affect a woman's menstrual cycle and therefore fertility.
3. Maintain healthy gut flora. It is important to maintain a good level of beneficial bacteria in your gut as this aids the absorption of food essential for the reproductive system. Good gut flora also helps to digest food, therefore ensuring you obtain the key nutrients to boost your fertility levels. Bio Live yoghurt contains strains of these bacteria.
4. Berry smoothies. These are an excellent way of including yoghurt which contains benefit gut bacteria. Berries contain highly absorbable nutrients and a wide range of antioxidants, helping to protect your eggs while they grow.
5. Vegetable and fruit juices. These have the benefit of containing highly absorbable nutrients. However, as this process removes fibre, always eat a piece of whole fruit as well as drinking juice, and dilute juice with at least 40 % mineral water.
6. Sprouts. Scientific research has also established that sprouts have much higher levels of nutrients compared to their food counterparts (e.g. broccoli sprouts will have a higher proportion of enzymes, vitamin and mineral content than broccoli, weight for weight). So, you can eat less to get the same benefit, which is helpful

when you need to increase your fertility. Add some sprouts to a salad the next time you eat one!

7. Drink plenty of fluids. Aim to drink around 1.5-2 litres of water a day to flush out toxins and to add the passage of nutrients into reproductive cells (e.g. ovaries and sperm). Remaining hydrated will also help to sustain energy and brain function.
8. Eliminate Alcohol. When you are preparing to conceive, drinking any alcohol at all can reduce your fertility by half – and the more you drink, the less likely you are to conceive. One study showed that women who drank fewer than 5 units of alcohol a week (i.e. less than 5 glasses of wine or 2 ½ pints of beer) were twice as likely to conceive within 6 months compared with those who drank more.
9. Stop smoking. Unsurprisingly smoking decreases fertility too. Smoking doubles the risk of having an ectopic pregnancy and damages the quality of eggs in ovaries, reducing the number capable of producing a baby. Smoking also reduces a man's fertility by reducing the amount of blood supply reaching your testes, where sperm is made.
10. Avoid Coffee. Research has shown that caffeine (found in tea, coffee, chocolate and fizzy drinks) can also decrease fertility. So, even these treats may have to go.

## Three lifestyle factors to improve fertility

1. Taking regular aerobic exercise increases oxygen flow around the body and to help aid the passage of nutrients in and toxins out of cells. Exercise also helps you unwind (as long as it's not done in excess!) and boosts the immune system. Consequently, moderate exercise is likely to boost your fertility.
2. Relaxation. Stress is an everyday fact of life and a little bit of stress is good for us. However too much stress can reduce your fertility and play havoc with other areas of health. Good ways of relaxing include yoga, listening to relaxing music, meditation or having a massage.
3. It's all in the timing! Did you know that you/your female partner is only fertile 1 in 4 weeks every menstrual cycle? Find out when by working out your most fertile period by monitoring the changes in mucous (a Natural Fertility practitioner will be able to help you with this), which indicates when you are most likely to ovulate.

## Why improving your diet may well make UrBump healthier

### **Why unrefined carbohydrates are important for your baby:**

1. Folic Acid for the development of the nervous system.
2. Calcium for teeth, bones, a healthy nervous system and heart.
3. Chromium for energy, protection of DNA and RNA and heart function.
4. Iron for oxygen transport around the body.
5. Zinc for hormone balance, nervous system, brain, teeth, bones and birth weight.

### **Why good quality protein is important for your baby:**

1. Protein is vital for growth and repair of body tissues
2. Protein is used to make hormones, enzymes, antibodies and neurotransmitters
3. Protein is also used to carry substances around the body (e.g. haemoglobin which transports most oxygen and some carbon dioxide in the blood)

### **Why essential fats are important for your baby:**

1. Essential fats are important for the development of the nervous system and brain, heart and blood vessels. Both omega 6 and omega 3 play an important role.
2. The omega 6 oils produce hormone type chemicals that help decrease inflammation, lower blood pressure, improve nerve and immune function and help insulin work. If insulin doesn't work properly, this can result in serious problems for your baby.
3. The omega 3 oils produce hormone type chemicals that are needed for vision, brain function, coordination, immune system and mood. Omega 3 fats are also key in brain development so a deficiency can cause learning disabilities. They may help prevent a premature birth.

## Following the UrBump programme, a day's meals might look like this:

### **Breakfast:**

Natural, live yoghurt with chopped fresh fruits and a handful of pumpkin seeds or a muesli made from oats, fresh hazelnuts, sunflower, pumpkin and sesame seeds and raisins with natural yoghurt and some apple juice.

### **Drinks:**

At least six glasses of water, herbal and fruit teas (beware of artificially flavoured or sweetened ones), fresh fruit and vegetable juices, occasional 'smoothies' - freshly made with fruits/fruit juices and yoghurt or soy milk.

### **Dinner:**

Grilled fresh fish, chicken or lean meat or a vegetarian alternative made from beans, lentils or soy. Serve with a large helping of freshly steamed or lightly stir-fried vegetables. You can also 'steam-fry' vegetables by using just the tiniest drop of oil and adding a couple of tablespoons of water steam them.

### **Lunch:**

A baked potato with tuna fish, tomato, celery and spring onion, with olive oil and lemon juice or a big brown rice salad with many types of fresh vegetables, cottage cheese, pumpkin seeds, olive oil, lemon juice and freshly ground black pepper.

### **Snacks:**

Fresh fruit, raw nuts and seeds (e.g. almonds, hazelnuts, Brazils, pumpkin and sunflower seeds); raw vegetables (e.g. carrots, broccoli, celery) with hummus. seeds, olive oil, lemon juice and freshly ground black pepper.