

Your
Wellbeing
Your **Future**

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#Fertilityfuture

Fertility Network Scotland is a branch of The Infertility Network UK
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Starting a family may be the last thing on your mind at the moment, but choices you make now can affect your fertility in the future. Knowledge can make all the difference.

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Age



Age matters. Both male and female fertility declines as you get older. Female fertility begins to decline from the age of 30 and falls sharply from the age of 35. Male sperm quality also reduces with age. Fertility treatment can't turn back the biological clock and is less effective as women get older.

STIs



Sexually transmitted infections are very common. They often have no symptoms and can have a lasting impact on your chances of having a family in the future. Both chlamydia and gonorrhoea can lead to conditions such as pelvic inflammatory disease which is a major cause of fertility problems. Using condoms will help to protect you.

Smoking



Smoking is known to damage both male and female fertility. Female smokers are twice as likely to have fertility problems as those who don't smoke, and they tend to have an earlier menopause. Male smokers can suffer decreased sperm quality.

Weight



Being very underweight or overweight can cause problems with egg and sperm production. Obesity is linked to ovulation problems for women and lower sperm counts for men. Being very underweight is not healthy for your fertility as women need some body fat to produce eggs normally.

Excess Drinking



Excess or binge drinking can affect sperm and egg production making it harder to conceive.

Recreational Drugs



Recreational drugs, even those which you may think are not particularly harmful such as cannabis, may have an impact on both male and female fertility.

Anabolic Steroids



Anabolic steroids can lead to permanent infertility. They can affect sperm production and cause the testicles to shrink and shut down completely. The effects are not always reversible.

Eating Disorders



Eating disorders such as anorexia often cause periods to stop and can have a lasting impact on health and fertility. Bulimia is linked with polycystic ovary syndrome which affects the way the ovaries work. In males, both conditions can affect sperm quality. It is important to seek professional help if you have an eating disorder.

Infertility can have a devastating effect on people's lives and even with treatment success is not guaranteed.

It is important to know your body. If you experience painful, irregular, or heavy periods or severe pelvic pain, talk to your GP, and get it checked out if you discover swelling or enlarged veins in the scrotum.

Keeping fit and healthy will not only improve your wellbeing now but will also help to protect your future fertility.