



The Creation Fertility Guide to Dumping The Addictions!

Addictions come in many shapes and sizes! Creation Fertility recommends counselling, complementary therapies and nutritional therapy to help restore normal brain chemistry whilst blood sugar regulation helps control cravings.

When Preparing for Pregnancy it is important to dump the addictions and detoxify to:

- a) Support conception - a colleague has written an excellent article here explaining how even casual drinking can reduce conceptual health. I suggest you read her article: <http://stepstorecovery.com/effects-alcohol-fertility/>
- b) Reduce the risk of “infertility” and
- c) Encourage a healthy pregnancy. Obviously alcohol should be avoided throughout the pregnancy and breast feeding period.

Alcohol: Whilst alcohol is an “accepted social toxin” it is teratogenic. During pregnancy alcohol crosses the placental barrier and enters the foetus, causing the level of the alcohol to be approximately the same as the mother. From a nutritional standpoint ***alcohol interferes with nutritional utilisation including zinc and folic acid, affects digestion, as well as increasing urinary excretion of vitamin and minerals.*** Alcohol has been shown to affect brain development in a baby. If regular alcohol is consumed during pregnancy it can lead to:

Foetal Alcohol Syndrome (FAS): A serious condition which can lead to abnormalities such as underweight and under length at birth, slow growth and failure to thrive after birth. It can affect the baby’s ability to suckle, disrupt sleep/wake patterns, and affect balance, motor control, visual recognition, memory, and mental development. Babies can be born with an unusually small head, joint and limb abnormalities, possible mental retardation and /or behavioural issues including hyperactivity and extreme nervousness. During school these children have also been found to be negatively related to co-operation, retention of information, comprehension of words, impulsiveness, tactfulness, word recall, organisation as well as attention skills. If this isn’t enough on maturation and adulthood children born to social drinkers continue to present subtle alcohol related decrements such as attention, memory and learning difficulties and a genetic likelihood of becoming a future alcoholic.

Alcohol and Male Reproduction: Alcohol causes loss of sperm cells, atrophy of the penis and semen tubules, increases the ratio of abnormal sperm, significantly decreases sperm concentration, output and motility and in some cases lead to sterility and impotence.

Caffeine: *“Caffeine intake can substantially lengthen the time it takes to become pregnant”*
Stanton et al, 1995

Present in tea, coffee, painkillers, cola drinks, medicines and chocolate. Caffeine has harmful effects on all aspects of reproductive health. Several studies have shown that it can lengthen the time to become pregnant, for some people, as little as one cup of coffee a day can halve the chances of conceiving. It has been shown that it can cause DNA damage and has also been linked to an



increased risk of miscarriage and lowered birth weight. Studies have shown that caffeine can affect sperm motility and been shown to immobilise sperm.

Substitute caffeine with pure water, herb or fruit teas, Bambu or Barley Cup or Caro or Rooibosch tea. If you are on any medication it is important to check with your GP that it is caffeine free and safe to take during pre-conception and pregnancy.

Street Drugs and Medication:

Cannabis – damages sperm production and causes problems with the placenta. There are 421 component chemicals which are combusted into over 2000 other chemicals when smoked – these remain cushioned in fat surrounding body organs which include the testes and ovaries. One of these is THC (tetrahydrocannabinol). This is known to increase the chances of in-fertility or a malformed child.

Cocaine or Crack - research indicates that this drug increase the chances of low birth weight, malformation, lifelong brain damage and psychiatric problems for both the user and child.

Opiates - heroine and methadone increase the risk of miscarriage, still births and mental instability.

Prescription Drugs - painkillers, tranquilisers, anti-depressants and over the counter products are not necessarily “safe” during preparing for pregnancy, when trying to conceive or pregnancy. It is important that you check with your GP whether your medications are safe.

It can take up to 10 years to remove the toxins from a smoker’s body!

Smoking:

Besides nicotine cigarettes contains thousands of other toxic, carcinogenic, mutagenic and immunosuppressive compounds including polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons, cyanide, carbon monoxide, lead and cadmium, ammonia and insecticides. The American tobacco industry, under pressure from Congress have named a further 599 chemicals it adds to cigarettes. Some of the adverse effects of smoking of reproduction and child health:

Reduced gestation period and low birth weight

Peri-natal mortality, still births and spontaneous abortions – smoker’s placenta’s tend to be thinner

Foetal malformations – cleft palate, cleft lip, central nervous system abnormalities, reduced growth, learning difficulties, neurological abnormalities, abnormal EEGs including epilepsy and hyperactivity. Children of heavily smoking fathers are more than twice as likely to have malformations. Children of smokers are more likely to have respiratory conditions. Evidence also suggests various diseases of the nervous system, sense organs, blood and blood forming organs, the skin, subcutaneous tissue and diseases of the genito urinary system.

Male and female infertility – in female’s cigarette smoking has been linked with early onset of the menopause as well as directly linked with infertility. In males it is associated with decreased sperm density, decreased sperm count, reduced testosterone secretion, and morphologically abnormal sperm and spermatozoa which can have a direct cause of various foetal malformations.