



WHAT TO DO *BEFORE* YOU GET PREGNANT

We encourage you to discuss preconceptual tests with your referring physician before you begin treatment at our clinic. For couples with special concerns, we would be glad to assist you in making a specialty consult. Our goals are not only to assist you in achieving pregnancy but also maximize your chances of a safe pregnancy and a healthy baby.

Before undergoing infertility treatment, you need a complete physical examination. We recommend the following screening tests that are offered by your referring physician. If you do not have a primary care physician to do these tests, they may be provided here. Please let us know if you need us to provide these services.

Cervical (Pap Smear) Screening

Documentation of a normal Pap smear within one-year of attempting conception is recommended.

Breast Screening

All women considering fertility treatments require annual breast exams. Any suspicious findings or abnormalities require an immediate and complete investigation before starting fertility treatments. Screening mammography is recommended in women between the ages of 35 and 40, or possibly earlier in women with multiple risk factors for breast cancer. Annual or semi-annual mammography is recommended in women over age 40.

Serologic Testing

Testing for immunity to rubella and varicella as well as standard STD tests (Chlamydia trachomatis titer [blood test] • HIV • Hepatitis-B surface antigen • Hepatitis-C antibody • RPR), and a blood type and Rh factor is encouraged. In selective cases, a complete blood count, testing for thyroid function, and glucose or insulin levels may be indicated.

Genetic Testing

Preconceptual testing for carriers of the cystic fibrosis gene is now recommended for many couples. After reviewing this test with your referring physician, our office can assist you in scheduling this test. Testing for other genetic disorders may be indicated based on family history and ethnic background. Couples at risk for inherited genetic disorders need a genetic consultation and we would be glad to arrange a consultation for you.

Vitamin Supplements

Supplemental folic acid (0.4 mg/day) is recommended prior to conception. Larger doses (4.0 mg/day) are recommended when there is a history of certain birth defects (neural tube defects). Your physician may recommend additional supplements prior to pregnancy.

Smoking and Alcohol

If you or your partner smoke, we advise you stop. Fertility is markedly impaired with smoking. Babies are adversely affected during their development and there is an increase in Sudden Infant Death. Children of smoking parents also have more asthma and pulmonary related illnesses. There are smoking cessation programs available to help you win this battle. Alcohol use is associated with reproductive, fetal, and pregnancy related complications. Even minimal alcohol has not been proven to be totally safe during pregnancy.

Caffeine

Drinking caffeinated beverages (greater than three per day) is associated with reduced fertility in some studies. Limiting caffeine ingestion is recommended during your infertility treatments.