

There are a myriad of reasons that affect our decisions about having children, but the one thing everyone needs is the right information to base those life-changing and important decisions on.

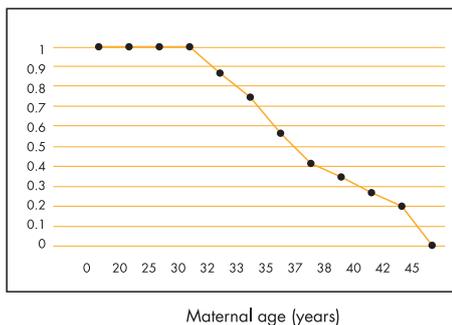
fertility facts for men & women

Survey of community perceptions vs reality reported to the Fertility Society of Australia Conference in October 2006 in Canberra reveals that 88% of men and 57% of women aged 30-40 believe they will have no problem conceiving. Yet we know that 1 in 6 couples experience fertility problems, and a medical cause cannot always be determined.

A comprehensive review of the academic literature and the media indicated that

- > women have too often delayed child-bearing in the belief that their fertility extends for longer than it does
- > men think infertility is a women's issue and doesn't apply to them
- > men and women are having less children than they say they want
- > the impact of societal and economic factors on decisions about family formation is significant.

Effect of Maternal age on Natural Fertility



Lifestyle factors affect conception:

- > drugs, smoking and alcohol
- > weight and medical history
- > sexually transmitted diseases such as Chlamydia contracted years before

1 in 6 couples experience fertility problems

- > 30% is solely a male factor
- > 30% is solely a female factor

Men's Fertility

- > male fertility declines from 35
- > genetic material in sperm deteriorates with poor lifestyle
- > associated with higher risk of miscarriage and birth abnormalities

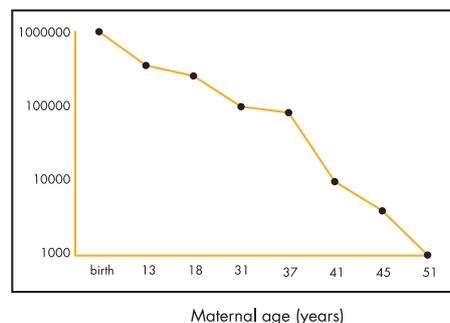
Women's Fertility

- > women are born with all the eggs they will ever have :1-3 million eggs
- > only 3-400 eggs will ovulate, the remainder simply degenerate
- > rate of degeneration varies between individuals. So biological age does not always equate with chronological age
- > chance of pregnancy in any month is best before 25 and fertility starts to decline after 30
- > at 35 the chance of conceiving is half that at 30 and at 40 is half that at 35
- > numbers and quality of eggs drop at least 10 years before fertility is lost

Ovarian reserve refers to the number of good quality eggs (oocytes) left within the ovaries.

- > As the number of eggs drops, so does egg quality - an important cause of infertility
- > A significant proportion of infertility is due to a reduction in ovarian reserve
- > This becomes more common as a woman ages
- > Egg numbers and quality drops at least 10 years before fertility is lost
- > Approximately 12% women, with regular unprotected intercourse, will not conceive after age 32 years
- > IVF is not a cure for low ovarian reserve
- > Ovarian reserve diminishes even with healthy lifestyle

The number of ova decreases from birth

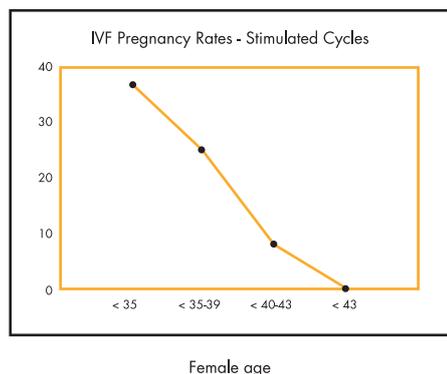


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Risk factors for reduced ovarian reserve

- > Family history of early menopause
- > Significant surgery (eg for endometriosis, salpingectomy).
- > Autoimmune disease
- > Smoking
- > Diet (vegetarian, no alcohol)
- > Past pelvic infection
- > Cancer therapy-chemotherapy, radiotherapy
- > Genetic abnormalities



There will still be time

Surveys show that most young people want 2 or 3 children. However the majority of them end up with one or none. Fertility declines with age, so delaying a first child means fewer second and third babies.

Can you afford to wait? Won't IVF fix any problems?

- > The chances of conceiving in a IVF cycle for a healthy young woman is highest when she is aged 37 or less
- > For older men and women the success rate drops with age
- > Other factors such as the nature of the infertility problem, the type of treatment and lifestyle determine outcome
- > But in general, the older you are the lower the success rate
- > IVF will not overcome lifestyle factors in men and women including drugs, alcohol, smoking, STDs and weight problems.
- > IVF is emotionally traumatic