

# Fertility Diet Basics

## Beverages

Liquids in our diet play an equally important role in maintaining our health as foods do. Sugared drinks are too often the culprit in sending our blood sugar levels on a roller coaster throughout the day. This includes soft drinks, flavored waters and even fruit juices. Stick with water and unsweetened teas to quench your thirst throughout the day. Organic whole milk is also a good choice for the protein and healthy fats we need. Caffeine is ok in moderation, go for less than 300mg per day and buy organic if possible.

## Carbohydrates

Carbs themselves are not the enemy, but refined white carbs should be avoided. Choose breads and pastas that are made from whole grains and brown rice or long grain white rice. Fruits and vegetables contain carbohydrates as well and an easy way to eat healthily is to follow a low **glycemic index diet**. The glycemic index tells us how quickly foods break down into sugar after we eat them. High GI foods equal high blood sugar levels. We want to avoid this because spiking our blood sugar also raises insulin levels which can negatively impact hormone levels. See the attached sheet for guidance on choosing low GI foods. \*\*Women with PCOS will need to make even stricter changes to their carb intake to help manage their symptoms.

## Proteins

Protein makes up a very important part of our diet and we are often lacking in healthy forms of protein. To avoid meat that has been treated with hormones and antibiotics, buy your meat from a health food store or better yet, from a local farmer. Make it a goal to incorporate protein with every meal in the form of eggs, cheese, yogurt, beans, whole grains such as quinoa, nuts, fish and lean meats. See our attached sheet on choosing healthy fish.

## Fats

Fats have gotten a bad rap because we associate eating fat with *being* fat. This is not the case. It is important to eat foods close to their natural state and too often the food industry removes the fat in foods at a considerable cost. When fat is taken out of foods it alters the other proteins and frequently trans fats, synthetic fats and even sugar are added to make up for the flavor. A recent study published in Newsweek (December 10, 2007) by Harvard identified the fertility benefits of having 1-2 whole milk servings per day. It is much better to sauté foods in saturated fats such as butter or even coconut oil because it has a higher tolerance for heat. When foods are cooked at very high temperatures, the fats are damaged and become unhealthy. Keep away from fried foods as these were shown in the Harvard study to have negative effects of fertility. Even as little as one donut or one medium French fry serving affected fertility in the women surveyed. So bake, steam and gently sauté your foods for maximum fertility benefit. Remember it's the type of fat, not the fat itself that you should avoid.