

Your Questions Answered – December 2016

A regular reader of my newsletter asks the following question:

After two years of trying for a baby, we've finally discovered that I'm okay but my husband has a low sperm count. Is there anything natural we can do to improve our chances?

Michael says . . .

How often have I heard this sad story? The poor woman endures years of testing and uncomfortable procedures before anyone thinks of the most basic and simple test that should be the first – the quantity and quality of the sperm. The doctor will want more specific hormone and other tests, but here are the basic practical things to start right now.

Don't let your husband wear tight jeans or Y-fronts - baggy trousers and boxer shorts are best.

Hot baths are out, especially just before bedtime.

Even small amounts of alcohol damage sperm, so he's better off without any for at least four months.

Give him lots of foods rich in zinc and vitamin E - pumpkin seeds, avocados, olive oil, seafood and oily fish. A daily dose of zinc and vitamin E should be added too.

American scientists found that a surprisingly high number - around 20% - of men with low sperm counts had suffered an injury to their testicles. Most of them happened when playing contact sports during adolescence so maybe the rugby scrum is not the safest place for would-be fathers.

The old wives' tale says not to do it too often, but the good news is that a regular sex life encourages the generation of more sperm.

Anyway, practice makes perfect!