

Do Now

Fertility, menstrual and gynaecological health



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Gurj and Fiz are trying for a baby. Fiz is 42 and Gurj is 39. They've been trying for two years, but Fiz has polycystic ovary syndrome and Gurj has a low sperm count. They both blame themselves, although they shouldn't, and the situation is getting stressful for the couple and Gurj has started smoking again.

Discuss: Why are the couple finding it hard to conceive a child?



Define the terms fertility, and menstrual and gynaecological health.

I would define fertility as.....

I would define menstrual health as...

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Learning outcomes:

Explain and correctly identify issues that cause reduced fertility in both males and females and how we can all look after our reproductive health.

Fertility – the ability to conceive children.

Menstrual health - physical, mental, and social wellbeing in relation to the menstrual cycle.

Gynaecological health - a healthcare focus on the development, diagnosis, prevention, and therapy of disorders and diseases distinct to the female reproductive system.

There are many factors which can affect our levels of fertility – in both males and females. Complete the mind map and use the image clues if you wish to. We'll go through our answers together as a class shortly.



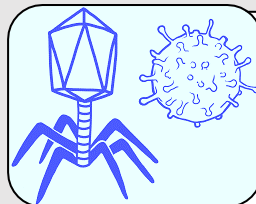
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One factor which I think can affect either male or female fertility is....



What factors can affect male and female fertility?



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What did we think? Let's collate our ideas before we reveal the answers and see if there is anything we've missed.

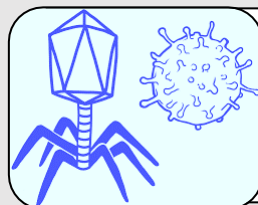
ANSWERS BEHIND THIS BOX



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What factors can affect male and female fertility?



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We have a lot of new terminology to get our heads around today. A few terms you will have heard of before, but many you won't – so before we delve in to the science behind fertility, let's just ensure we're familiar with the key terms.

You have been given a terminology match-up task. Complete your table, and don't forget the final column. You can work in pairs to complete this task.

Key Term	Match Up	Definition	Use in a sentence
Reproductive system		Infections acquired by sexual contact, which may pass from person to person in blood, semen, or vaginal and other bodily fluids.	
Sexually transmitted infections (STIs)		The inability to conceive children.	
Chlamydia		A condition affecting the red blood cells stemming from a lack of iron.	
Oestrogen		The system of organs and parts which function in reproduction, consisting in the male especially of the testes, penis, seminal vesicles, prostate, and urethra and in the female especially of the ovaries, fallopian tubes, uterus, vagina, and vulva.	
Infertility		A measure of the number of spermatozoa per ejaculation or per measured amount of semen, used as an indication of a man's fertility.	
Menstruation		One of the hormones which helps to regulate and maintain a healthy reproductive system in women.	
Anaemia		A common STI which can lead to inflammation and fertility issues in men and women if left untreated.	
Sperm count		The process in a woman of discharging blood and other material from the lining of the uterus, normally once a month.	
Menopause		A period of three months, used as a division of the duration of pregnancy.	
Trimester		The period in a woman's life (typically between the ages of 45 and 50) when menstruation ceases.	

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Why Does Reproductive Health Matter?

Reproductive health is about looking after the parts of the body involved in reproduction, fertility and sexual health. Good reproductive health is linked to:

1. Healthy relationships
2. Safe sexual choices
3. Physical wellbeing
4. Future fertility
5. Mental wellbeing

One important thing to remember is that everybody's journey is different. People make different choices about relationships, sex and starting a family. What matters is that decisions are safe, legal, informed and respectful.

Protecting Your Reproductive Health

Some of the biggest risks to reproductive health come from sexually transmitted infections (STIs).

For example, chlamydia is one of the most common STIs in young people. Many people experience no symptoms, which means it can go unnoticed and untreated.

Using condoms and accessing regular sexual health checks are two of the most effective ways of protecting yourself and others.

Why do you think some people avoid sexual health testing even when they know it is important?

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What Can Affect Fertility and Reproductive Health?

Some factors are outside our control, such as certain medical conditions, genetics or hormonal disorders. However, there are also lifestyle choices that can affect reproductive health over time.

Research shows that reproductive health can be influenced by:

- 🚭 Smoking
- ⚖️ Being significantly over or under a healthy weight
- 🥗 Poor diet and nutrition
- 🏃 Lack of physical activity
- 🍷 Excessive alcohol consumption
- 😞 Long-term stress and poor mental wellbeing

Looking after your reproductive health is really about looking after your overall health.

Healthy habits such as eating well, exercising regularly, getting enough sleep and managing stress can all contribute to better physical and mental wellbeing throughout life.

Not everything that affects fertility or reproductive health can be prevented, but many healthy lifestyle choices made today can have a positive impact on future health and wellbeing.

Which lifestyle factor do you think has the biggest impact on long-term health, and why?



DISCUSS!

All hope is not lost – in fact in the UK now more women have babies in their 40s than 20s - and the trend is global too, even though the chances of a successful pregnancy is far more difficult. **Why do you think this is?**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tHo4X3fyUGg>

So, what about Fiz and Gurj?

Well, every case is different, but we now know that Fiz's reproductive health may be affected by both her age and a genealogical condition – polycystic ovary syndrome. Gurj's fertility levels may be affected slightly by his age (this is less of a factor in men) but certainly by the fact he is smoking. Smoking can directly contribute to a lower sperm count and less healthy sperm too.

However, there are options open for the couple...

What options are there for couples struggling to conceive?

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1d9ebNubPDM>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=khXjHloulB4>

You have been given a bingo card. Whilst listening carefully, you need to **cross out all the statements that you hear**. The first person to cross out all the statements will shout 'bingo'. I



Vasectomy reversals or sperm retrieval surgery can also help men.	Men can try hormonal therapy or receive certain medications to improve fertility.	Single people and lesbians may try manual insemination first, through medical means.
The first course of action for anyone is stop smoking.	Success rates in the UK are improving in fertility treatment.	Obese people must lose weight in order to conceive.
IVF (in vitro fertilisation) procedures are increasing overall, and more are successful.	Eating oysters before bed is highly recommended.	Most couples wait two years before pursuing fertility treatment.

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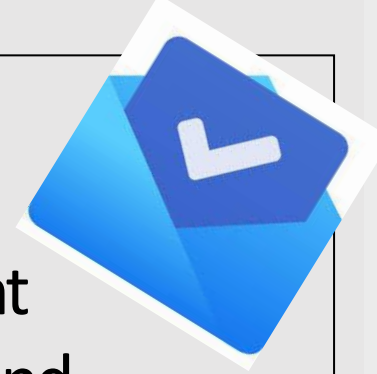
Let's check our answers together now. A few of the answers weren't in the clips – two of these touch on good advice, but one is just a myth. **Which one is the myth, do you think?**



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Inbox Full!

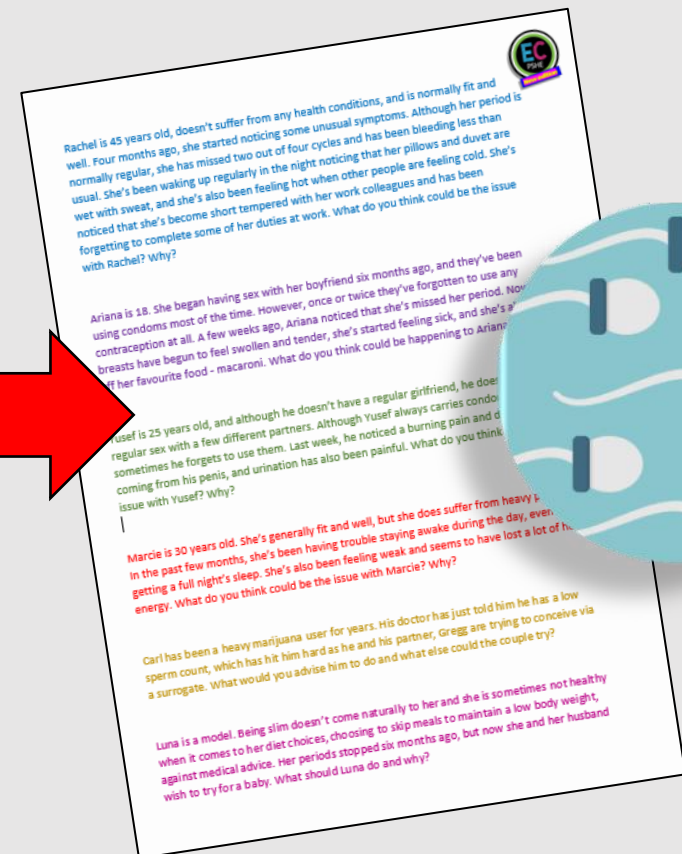
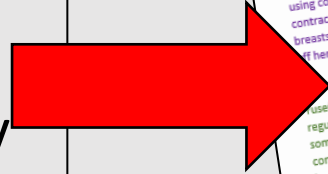
You are a Fertility Advice Counsellor.
You run a support page for people who want to ask about issues relating to their fertility and reproductive health.



Read your clients' case studies carefully.

Create clear and helpful replies what you have learnt from today.

Explain what might be the issue with each person, why you think this and any advice that could help improve their situation.



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Need Support? You're Not Alone

If anything in today's lesson has affected you, or you want to talk to someone, there is help available.



Mental Health & Low Mood

YoungMinds – <https://www.youngminds.org.uk>
Kooth – <https://www.kooth.com>
Mind – <https://www.mind.org.uk>

Talk to Someone

Your Tutor or Head of Year – We're here to help.
Wellbeing Team and School Nurse
Report a Concern on Satchel
Safeguarding Team with the Purple lanyards

Healthy Lifestyle

NHS Every Mind Matters – <https://www.nhs.uk/every-mind-matters>
Change4Life – <https://www.nhs.uk/change4life>

Apps That Can Help

Calm – For mindfulness and sleep.
Headspace – Meditation and stress relief.
Clear Fear – Manage anxiety (designed for young people).
MeeTwo – Anonymously talk to other teens, moderated by experts.

Eating Concerns

Beat Eating Disorders –
<https://www.beateatingdisorders.org.uk>
NHS Live Well – Eating Disorders –
<https://www.nhs.uk/mental-health/conditions/eating-disorders/>