

# Preconception checklist for men



**There are many ways you can help support the healthy development of your future baby. New sperm takes about three months to make, so it's best to start making healthy changes at least three months before trying to get pregnant.**

Here's a simple checklist to help improve your own health, and your sperm health.

- ☐ Maintain a healthy weight
- ☐ Move more, sit less.
- ☐ Enjoy a healthy diet
- ☐ Quit smoking tobacco or vaping
- ☐ Stop drinking alcohol and avoid recreational drugs
- ☐ Book yourself in for a sexual health check
- ☐ Manage pre-existing health conditions
- ☐ Book a check-up with your General Practitioner (GP)
- ☐ Reduce your exposure to harmful chemicals

## Key tips

### Healthy weight

A healthy weight increases your chance of having a healthy baby. Living with overweight, obesity or underweight can lower sperm quality and your chance of conceiving. Eating well, moving regularly and getting good sleep can all contribute to a healthy weight. Your GP can support you to find the right health professionals or resources to help meet your healthy weight goals.

### Move more, sit less

Regular exercise or movement can increase fertility and optimise physical health, mental health and support healthy weights.

Aim to move for at least 30 minutes each day, which can include a combination of aerobic (e.g. walking, running or dancing), resistance (weights or strength-based) or flexibility training (e.g. yoga, gymnastics or Pilates). Any activity that gets you huffing and puffing counts as good movement.

Sedentary behaviour, such as sitting or lying down are associated with poorer long term health outcomes. To minimise, or break up long periods of sitting, try scheduling a walking meeting at work, using a standing desk, or standing up for commercial breaks or in between episodes.

### Enjoy a healthy diet

A diet rich in fruits, vegetables, wholegrains, dairy, and lean proteins can boost your chances of having a healthy baby.

Using the five food groups as a guide, choose meals based around vegetables, wholegrains and lean proteins (meat or dairy) with snacks focused on fruit, nuts, seeds or dairy. Healthy eating does not have to be complicated; fresh, whole foods help to give your body the vitamins, minerals, and energy it needs.

When grocery shopping, check food labels and pick items with fewer than five ingredients. Avoid foods where sugar (or an alternative such as maple syrup or rice syrup), fat, or salt (sodium) are the first three ingredients.

### Quit smoking tobacco or vaping

Smoking tobacco and vaping harm your own health, the quality of your sperm and reduce fertility. Quitting is one of the best things you can do for your future baby. Talk to your health professional to access the best support for you, to help you quit for good.

### Stop drinking alcohol and avoid drugs

Drinking alcohol or using recreational drugs, including steroids, impacts your own health but also reduces the quality, or number of your sperm. Making the switch to non-alcoholic drinks and talking to a health professional will help ensure you have the right supports in place.

### Book yourself in for a sexual health check

Sexually transmitted infections (STIs) often don't cause symptoms, but if left untreated can lead to infertility. Most can be easily treated with antibiotics if caught early. Book a visit with your GP or at a local sexual health clinic.

### Manage any health conditions

Chronic conditions like diabetes or high blood pressure and medications taken to manage physical or mental health can impact the health of your sperm. Talk to your GP about your health concerns and medications Before the Baby Bump.

### Environmental chemicals

Environmental toxins can come from a variety of sources such as air or water pollution, paint, cleaning or gardening chemicals or industry-related occupations. Discuss any concerns you have about potential exposure to toxins with your GP.

### Book a check-up

Visit your GP so they can support you and discuss your Before the Baby Bump Checklist. This will help make sure you are in the best health before trying for a baby.

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