

let's talk about men's health

A photograph of a man and a young boy, both smiling and looking upwards. The man is in the foreground, wearing a white shirt. The boy is behind him, holding a large rainbow flag. The background is a soft-focus outdoor setting.

health and fertility go hand in hand

Men's health and fertility are intertwined. If you're planning on having children now, or sometime in the future, it's never too early to get informed about how you can optimize your health and your fertility.

Also, you don't have to do it alone. WIN is here to offer clinical expertise and personalized guidance to help you navigate the path to parenthood, **no matter what your journey entails.**

male fertility 101

Male infertility can be caused by anything that negatively impacts sperm production, quality, or the sperm's ability to travel to an egg cell.

sperm stats:

One in (a few) million - Sperm are continuously produced in the testicles, which generate several million viable sperm daily, but it only takes one sperm cell to fertilize an egg. Only the fastest and most resilient sperm will make it, competing against anywhere from 15 million to 200 million other sperm cells within the average ejaculation.

Sperm live fast and die young - The journey to the egg is long and most sperm cells die trying - only living up to 5 days on average inside the female reproductive tract.

Age matters - Male fertility doesn't decline as sharply with age as female fertility does, but men over 40 are more likely to experience erectile dysfunction, low testosterone, and a gradual decrease in sperm quantity/quality - all of which can make it more difficult to conceive.

Racial disparities - Some research suggests that different ethnic groups may produce different amounts of healthy sperm. For example, a 2020 study found that Black men were more likely to have a low sperm count compared to white, Asian, and Hispanic men.

50%

of known infertility cases are attributed to male factor

25%

of couples skip semen analysis when undergoing fertility evaluation

30M

men in the U.S. are impacted by low testosterone (low-t)

A number of medical conditions can put men at a higher risk of experiencing male infertility, including:

- Endocrine disorders, such as diabetes
- Hormone imbalances
- Infections, including sexually transmitted infections (STI's)
- Genetic disorders, such as cystic fibrosis
- Physical injury to the testicle
- Surgery on or near the testis, such as hernia repairs
- Exposures to toxic chemicals, including chemotherapy or radiation
- Physical blockage of the sperm delivery routes

in good health

In addition to medical conditions, certain lifestyle factors can also be responsible for fertility issues in men. **Ultimately, what is good for general health is good for sperm health.**

To improve your overall health and fertility, here are 5 factors to look out for:



Weight

According to the CDC, 40.3% of men aged 20-39 are obese. Low sperm count is associated with having more body fat and a higher BMI (body mass index). Obesity also lowers testosterone levels, which drive sperm production. Losing weight is often easier said than done, but focusing on moving more and eating a balanced diet can work in tandem to improve overall health and fertility.



Smoking

Using tobacco products (including vaping) has been proven to decrease fertility in men. In many ways, smoking is detrimental to sperm — affecting sperm volume, count, and motility. Smoking is also known to make fertility treatments like in vitro fertilization (IVF) less likely to be successful.



Alcohol

Several studies have documented impotence, decreased testosterone, and atrophy of the testicles from long-term, heavy alcohol use. For men, binge drinking is defined as five or more drinks consumed within two hours, while heavy drinking is 15 or more drinks per week.



Drug Use

Recreational drugs negatively affect male fertility. For example, smoking marijuana can affect the sperm's shape and decrease semen volume and sperm count. The use of opiates like oxycontin and fentanyl are known to affect hormone levels and can lead to DNA problems. Men who use anabolic steroids or testosterone also run an increased risk of reduced sperm count.



Heat Exposure

Testicles need to stay cooler than the rest of the body in order to manufacture sperm properly, which is why they hang outside in the scrotum instead of being kept inside the body cavity. Spending too much time in the hot tub or sauna, or even working with a hot laptop on your lap, can decrease sperm count.

next steps

A great way to start better managing your health is to have an open and honest conversation with your primary care doctor about your risk factors for certain conditions or any current symptoms you may be experiencing.

If you suspect you have fertility issues, it is important to be evaluated by a fertility specialist sooner than later. There are many treatment options available and actions you can take to reach your goal of growing your family.

WIN provides guidance and resources to help you enhance your overall health and set the foundation for better outcomes throughout your family-building journey.



Dedicated care team

Nurse Care Advocates, Behavioral Health Care Advocates, and in-house nutrition coaches work in unison to provide tailored support — helping members navigate challenges and establish healthy routines to improve overall well-being.



Specialized care network

WIN members can be referred to in-network providers specializing in Reproductive Urology to support those navigating male factor infertility or testosterone deficiency.



Preconception support

Access to lifestyle support and an at-home sperm testing kit — including a personalized fertility report and analysis of sperm volume, count, and concentration.

need on-demand support?

From late night questions and medication assistance to emotional support, our **Nurse Care Advocates are available 24/7** through the WINFamily App to help you navigate your fertility journey.



Clinical guidance is a tap away.

Scan to download the WINFamily App and create your account using your company name.

