

- **Fact:** The sperm count in males varies from time to time. Illness, medications, and time between ejaculations can affect the sperm number and motility. Lifestyle changes like quitting smoking, losing weight, and staying out of hot tubs, may also help.
- **Fallacy:** A man's fertility can be judged by the thickness and volume of his semen.
- **Fact:** The volume and consistency of the semen is not related to its fertility potential, which depends upon the sperm count. It can only be assessed by microscopic examination.
- **Fallacy:** You get pregnant after you adopt a baby.
- **Fact:** Studies have shown that pregnancy rate after adopting is 5%, same as for those who do not adopt.
- **Fallacy:** Career should take priority as we have the entire lifetime to have a baby.
- **Fact:** Though majority of the couples are postponing conception due to demanding careers, women's fertility does decline with age and there is no treatment available that can "turn back the clock" on a woman's ovaries.
- **Fallacy:** The doctor may get irritated if I ask too many questions.
- **Fact:** The doctor and patient work as a team. You need to be informed about what treatments are available as what is right for one couple may not be applicable for another. Ask the doctor for any information without any hesitation.

- **Fallacy:** I cannot take time off from infertility treatment for any reason as this month may just be "THE" one! treatment for any reason as this month may just be "THE" one!
- **Fact:** Continuity in treatment is important, but sometimes a break can provide much needed rest and renewal for the next step in treatment.



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## INFERTILITY Fallacies & Facts

*Infertility is.....  
Standing on a line between  
giving up  
and  
seeing how much more you can take*

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One out of every six couples experiences trouble conceiving sometime during their reproductive years. This can make infertility a devastating experience which can change every aspect of a couple's life. However, as it is a very personal and private issue many couples hesitate to share this experience with friends and family, resulting in intense suffering and feeling of isolation. This further gives rise to host of myths and fallacies.

**Let's know the facts that underlie these fallacies so that they can be dealt with in a better way after proper understanding.**

- **Fallacy:** Incompatibility of blood groups between husband and wife can cause infertility
- **Fact:** There is no relationship between blood groups and infertility.
- **Fallacy:** Inability to conceive is a woman's problem
- **Fact:** Male factor accounts for 40% of infertility, female factor accounts for 40%, combined female and male problems account for 10% and the remaining 10% are due to unexplained causes. Thus, both man and woman need to be evaluated during an infertility work-up.
- **Fallacy:** Only I am having this problem.
- **Fact:** Nearly 1 in 6 couples experience infertility at some point in their lives. It is fairly common in both men and women. Majority of cases have a specific cause for infertility that can be treated by infertility specialists.

- **Fallacy:** For pregnancy to occur, you just need to give it enough time.
- **Fact:** A certain time period (12 months for couples with age below 35 years and 6 months for couples over 35 years) should be given for conception to occur after unprotected intercourse.
- **Fallacy:** You should have sex everyday if you want to conceive.
- **Fact:** Normal, healthy sperm remains active in the woman's reproductive system for 48-72 hours. So, having intercourse at 36-48 hour intervals around the time of ovulation is usually adequate.
- **Fallacy:** The reason I'm not getting pregnant is because most of the sperm leaks out of the vagina after intercourse.
- **Fact:** Loss of seminal fluid after intercourse is perfectly normal and common in most women. If your partner had his climax inside you, then you can be sure that no matter how much fluid you lose afterwards, enough sperm will reach the cervical mucus. This discharge is not a cause of infertility.
- **Fallacy:** Sexual activity during adolescence and excessive masturbation can result in azoospermia (no sperms).
- **Fact:** Masturbation is a normal activity in which most boys and men indulge. It does not affect the sperm count as sperms are constantly being produced in the testes. However, other factors

like environmental factors, alcohol, smoking, etc. can affect sperm count.

- **Fallacy:** Painful periods cause infertility.
- **Fact:** Painful periods do not affect fertility. On the contrary, regular painful periods are a sign of ovulatory cycles which indicate fertility. However, the cause of infertility can be endometriosis, i.e., progressively worsening pain during periods.
- **Fallacy:** If you have had one child, you cannot be infertile.
- **Fact:** Even after having one child, secondary infertility can occur. It is as common as primary infertility. Many factors may be responsible for this.
- **Fallacy:** The pill causes infertility.
- **Fact:** There is no relation between fertility problems and the use of contraceptive pills for any length of time. This can be justified by citing the number of women who become pregnant because they forgot taking their pill.
- **Fallacy:** I have no problems during sex. Since I am virile, my sperm count must be normal.
- **Fact:** There is no correlation between male fertility and virility. Men with totally normal sex drives may have no sperms at all!
- **Fallacy:** A man's sperm count will be the same each time examined.