



Self Care: Day 10

YOUR BEDROOM CHECKUP FOR FERTILITY

Let's talk about the big S word that happens in the bedroom and helps you get pregnant.

SLEEP!

Thought I was going in a different direction? I get it - too often sleepiness is what blocks the other big S. But for our gals that are hot in pursuit of conception, I'm trusting you have that S covered.

Sleep is so important to our overall health, and [studies](#) show that our reproductive health is no exception. **Sleep helps our bodies detox, restore, and can also dramatically impact our hormonal balance.** Each night our endocrine systems are busy producing estrogen, progesterone, luteinizing hormone (LH) and follicle stimulating hormone (FSH). And in men, nightly testosterone gets released into the body during sleep. Sleep deprivation in men can even lead to issues with sperm production and sperm mobility.

A few days ago, we dove deep into stress - another major stress inducing culprit is sleep deprivation. We intuitively know this - if you're anything like me, your ability to handle stress plummets when you're fatigued. And the surge in cortisol that this creates interrupts your sex hormones, including estrogen, testosterone, and progesterone.

It's not just too little sleep that hurts our chances of conception - too much sleep can as well! Experts say we should strive to get no less than 6 hours and no more than 9 hours of sleep per night, and the optimal amount seems to be 7-8 hours per night for fertility. Time of day can also play a role in successful sleep, with the most effective sleep schedule following the rhythm of the sun. In fact, women working a night-shift have been shown to have disturbances in the bodies' circadian rhythm, negatively impacting fertility. Getting into a routine pattern at a predictable bedtime seems to be optimal for stabilizing hormones in the body.

[Melatonin](#) and amino acids like [tryptophan](#) can help support deep and healthy sleep.

Time of day and the quantity of sleep aren't the only factors at play. The quality of your sleep is just as important. **Sleep environment also plays a critical role;** for instance, [studies](#) show blue light from our electronic devices can inhibit the release of melatonin in the body while we sleep. Staying off your smartphone for an hour before bed and putting your phone to bed in a different room can benefit your fertility.



Blue light isn't the only fertility-nemesis your electronic devices may be emitting: **electromagnetic fields (EMFs)** have become one of the most widespread environmental toxins over the last two decades. This also happens to be the same period of time the world has experienced a dramatic drop in fertility rates.

One [study](#) looked at radiofrequency electromagnetic fields (RF-EMFs) from cell phones, laptops, Wi-Fi, and microwave ovens on male and female fertility. The result?

- ❖ Lowered sperm count, morphology, and motility
- ❖ Damaged kinases in cellular metabolism and the endocrine system
- ❖ Produced genotoxicity, genomic instability and oxidative stress
- ❖ Negatively impacted follicular growth, early embryonic development, and pregnancy success

My husband Mark attributes this one shift in habits to a massive boost in his sperm health while we were trying to conceive. Previously his cell phone was always in his pocket, and his laptop frequently on his lap. At times he would actually shove his cell phone between his legs while balancing his laptop on his lap, effectively creating an EMF sandwich for the family jewels! Though we used other approaches for him (cutting the high-intensity exercise, incorporating acupuncture, supplements, and dietary shifts), he personally feels reducing his EMF exposure was the biggest difference maker for him.

So what 's a gal (or guy) to do in a WiFi saturated world? Day or night, keep your laptop off your lap and your cell phone off your body whenever possible. If that's not possible, it could be smart to invest in casing that protects and blocks EMF's. I personally have a [Defender Shield](#) for my smartphone.



For a very fertility-friendly sleep environment, take it one step further: turn the Wi-Fi off in your house at night. That may sound extreme, but can pay big dividends - especially with male fertility. A study in Hong Kong conducted in 2019 found that even just 24 hours of exposure to a WiFi router nearly tripled the rate of sperm death (as opposed to sperm samples that had no exposure), and also lowered sperm motility. Another study conducted in Denmark looked at plant growth amidst WiFi radiation - the plants in a WiFi-free environment flourished, while the plants exposed to WiFi never grew. This suggests excessive exposure to WiFi radiation can damage cells and reduce cellular growth. There's a lot of suspicion regarding the impact of Wi-Fi on growing fetuses and children as well, so cutting the WiFi at night is a great habit to keep up post-conception as well!

Some of this advice may sound challenging to execute or even a little extreme - after all, everyone you know is using a cell phone, WiFi, and uses their laptop in the proper place: the lap. But **the World Health Organization (WHO) has predicted that infertility will be the third most serious condition after cancer and cardiovascular disease in the 21st century.** Could this be part of the reason why?



SELF-CARE VIDEOS

For your self care today, take a few minutes to evaluate the EMF exposure you and your partner may be experiencing in your home, your workplace, and your day-to-day life, and think about how to limit it. We'll also revisit the 'Lymphatic Pump' as you relax into your castor oil pack.

LYMPHATIC PUMP

To activate the lymph, we're going to perform a simple pumping technique around the collarbone area.

1. Touch the collarbone. Make sure you are to the side of the big muscular area along the trachea. We do not want to be on top of the trachea.
2. Curl your fingers to the inside to get over and behind the collarbone.
3. Apply gentle pressure for 2 seconds.
4. Release that pressure for 2 seconds. You do not need to break contact with the skin.
5. Repeat 5 times.



VIDEO: LYMPHATIC PUMP (3MIN)

CASTOR OIL PACK

Place the castor oil pack over your lower abdomen, cover it with the plastic sheet and apply the hot water bottle. Cover with a towel, lay back and relax for anywhere from 10-45 minutes. *For a full description, reference Day 1.*



VIDEO: CASTOR OIL PACK (4MIN)