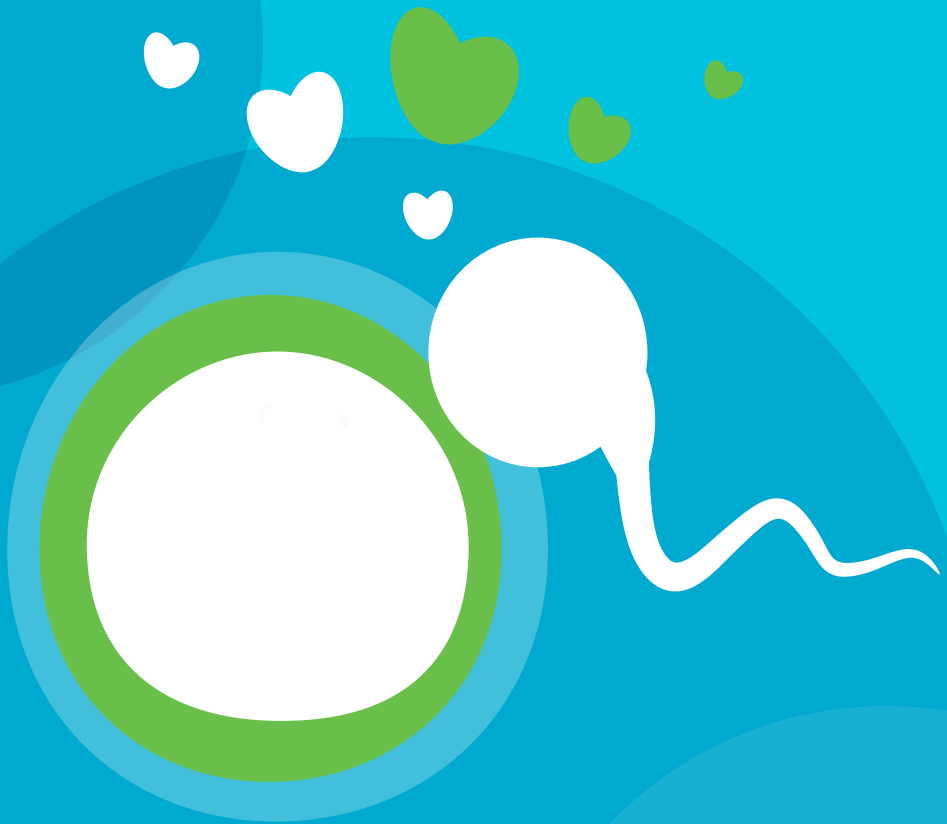


Your Future Fertility



Babies are probably the last thing on your mind right now. But, if you want to **give yourself the best chance** of having a family in the future, there are a few things you should know.

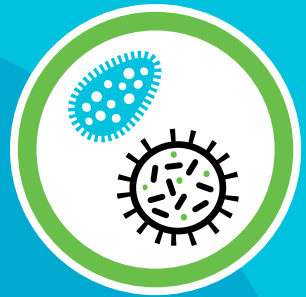


AGE

Fertility changes with age. Women's fertility gradually declines from around the age of 30, with a more significant decline from around 35. Sperm quality can also reduce with age.

STIs

Sperm quality can also reduce with age. Sexually transmitted infections such as chlamydia and gonorrhoea can have a lasting impact on your future fertility. If you are sexually active always practice safe sex and get tested at least once a year, or every time you get a new sexual partner.



WEIGHT

Being very underweight or overweight can affect ovulation and sperm production. Being physically active and eating a balanced diet can support your overall health and fertility.

ALCOHOL

Drinking excessive amounts of alcohol can reduce fertility in both men and women. It can also lead to difficulties in getting and keeping an erection.



SMOKING AND VAPING

Smoking can damage egg quality and cause early menopause. Smoking can also reduce the quality of sperm and lower sperm count. Vaping may affect fertility, although we are still learning about its long-term effects. Chemicals in e-cigarettes may affect sperm quality and could also affect reproductive health in both men and women.



DRUGS

Recreational drugs can affect your fertility in a range of different ways. Cannabis can lower men's sperm count, and long-term use of cocaine, heroin and ecstasy can lead to fertility problems for all genders.



STEROIDS

Anabolic steroid misuse can lead to permanent infertility. Over time, it can stop the brain from sending the signals the body needs to make testosterone and sperm naturally. This may shrink the testicles and stop them producing sperm. In women steroid use can affect hormone production and stop ovulation.





EATING DISORDERS

Women with eating disorders such as anorexia and bulimia often see changes to their menstrual cycles due to weight loss. For some women, their periods may stop altogether. Men with anorexia and bulimia can fall far below a healthy BMI, which can reduce semen quality and lower sperm count.

KNOW YOUR BODY

If you notice a lump, swelling or enlarged vein in your scrotum, speak to your GP. If your periods are often irregular or very heavy, or you have severe pelvic pain that affects your day-to-day life speak to your GP.



Infertility can have a devastating effect on people's lives. It can be treated but success is not guaranteed. It makes sense to avoid problems if you can. By following the advice above not only will you improve your general health, but you will also help to protect your future fertility.

**WANT TO
KNOW MORE?**



Visit endometriosis-uk.org/fertility-project-wales

Email fertilityprojectwales@endometriosis-uk.org