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Christina's 10 Tips for Improving your Fertility Naturally

1. **Develop a spiritual practice:** Your journey to parenthood may take longer than you anticipate, so having a faith in a Higher Power (whatever that means for you) will help you to stay hopeful and find peace along the way. Your faith will also help you once you do conceive when a whole new set of worries begin. If you are a Christian, I highly recommend reading "[Prayers & Promises for Supernatural Childbirth](#)" by Jackie Mize. The prayer to alleviate fear and doubt, along with the prayer for conception were incredibly powerful for me. The Biblical references to Hannah, Sarah, and Elizabeth were also quite comforting during times of doubt and worry. Once pregnant, I turned to the prayers for pregnancy and delivery.
2. **Pray/meditate/visualize daily:** Regardless of your faith, take time each day to quietly pray/meditate/visualize your pregnancy wishes. Imagine yourself pregnant and visualize your future children. I highly [recommend Kathy Freston's "Visualizing Pregnancy"](#) guided visualization available on iTunes or Amazon. I used this visualization daily around ovulation and just after fertility treatments. I also had sessions with a hypnotherapist to improve my fertility, clear past issues, and increase relaxation. Lastly, I absolutely love and highly recommend Julia Indichova's books and imagery/body talk CDs available on www.fertileheart.com. When you visit her site, you can also sign up for her newsletter, register for one of her teleconferences, or read through her blogs and forum. She's such a wonderful source of information, wisdom, and encouragement.
3. **Know your fertile window:** Most women don't really know when they ovulate, but there are natural signs which can help you pinpoint ovulation, such as increased cervical mucus, a luteinizing hormone surge which can be detected in your urine stream by ovulation predictor tests, and a rise in basal body temperature which can be detected by monitoring your basal body temperature every morning before you rise. Read "[Taking Charge of Your Fertility](#)" by Toni Weschler to help you learn how to pinpoint your ovulation and then ensure that you "do the deed" starting 4 days before you ovulate and continuing a day or two after ovulation (=your fertile window). Websites like, www.fertilityfriend.com, offer ovulation charting tools and smart phone apps to help you track your ovulation.
4. **Practice yoga, Tai-Chi or another mind-body forms of exercise:** Yoga, tai-chi and other mind-body types of exercises will improve your blood circulation and can help to balance your bodily functions, including your hormones. These gentle forms of exercise are particularly good after you've ovulated, and you can use the final resting pose(s) to practice your visualization, meditate, or pray to restore peace of mind. Speak to your yoga instructor about which poses work best pre- and post- ovulation.

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- 5. Embrace Chinese Medicine:** Regular [acupuncture treatments and Chinese herbs](#) have been known to improve both male and female fertility. Both the acupuncture and herbs work to restore balance to your bodily functions, as well as improve blood circulation and relaxation. Kidney points are particularly important for improving fertility as the Kidney meridian “rules” your reproductive system. Your acupuncturist or herbalist will prescribe the right mix of herbs for you, which will likely target your Kidney, Liver, and Spleen meridians.
- 6. Follow a fertility-friendly diet:** Your diet can also greatly affect your fertility, especially when you ingest a lot of toxins. Follow a healthy, balanced diet which is heavy on plant-based foods yet still supplies sufficient protein and fats from either animal or plant sources. Choose for organic products whenever possible. Avoid sugars, artificial ingredients, and sweeteners. Also avoid soy products because they mimic estrogen in your body and can create an imbalance in your natural estrogen level. Reduce or completely give up caffeine, alcohol, and cigarettes as all have been known to interfere with your hormone levels. Your partner should be following the same sort of diet. Not very much fun, I know—it was especially hard to cut back on my wine intake! Read [“The Fertility Diet”](#) for more information on this subject.
- 7. Take pre-natal vitamins and supplements:** Start taking a pre-natal vitamin even before you conceive as it will help you to receive the vitamins and minerals needed most during pregnancy. It will also help your body build up its reserve of folic acid before conception. Depending on your prenatal vitamin’s ingredients, you may wish to supplement extra vitamins and minerals, such as Zinc, Selenium, Vitamin B-6, B-12, Vitamin E, Vitamin C, Manganese, Iron, and Copper. Avoid taking Vitamin A unless it’s in the form of beta-carotene. CoQ-10, Royal Bee Jelly, DHEA, and L-Arginine are known to be helpful for women with decreased ovarian reserve (basically, anyone over 35). You may wish to also consider taking probiotics and high-quality, mercury free fish body oil (avoid liver oil due to increased toxins found in fish liver). The right supplements can also help with male fertility, especially L-Carnitine, L-Arginine, and Royal Bee Jelly. Ask your naturopath, physician, OB-GYN, or reproductive endocrinologist about which vitamins and supplements you should be taking and do your own research as well. Above all, listen to your instinct about what vitamins and supplements your body needs. This is the chart I referenced for our vitamins and supplements, taken from [“Natural Solutions to Infertility”](#) by Marilyn Glenville.

Nutrients	You	Your Partner
Folic acid	400mcg	400mcg
Zinc	30mg	30mg
Selenium	100mcg	100mcg
Fish oil	1000mg	1000mg
Vitamin B6	up to 50mg	up to 50mg
Vitamin B12	up to 50mcg	up to 50mcg

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Vitamin E	300-400iu	300-400iu
Vitamin C	1000mg	1000mg
Vitamin A	up to 2300iu	-
Manganese	5mg	5mg
L-arginine	-	300mg
L-carnitine	-	100mg
L-Taurine	-	100mg

- 8. Keep your Body Mass Index (BMI) between 20-25:** Being overweight or underweight can also interfere with your fertility, so experts recommend that women keep their BMI between 20-25. Although many women don't see the point in losing weight while trying to conceive only to regain it during pregnancy, your fertility will greatly improve as you lose weight and move closer to a BMI below 25. Following a fertility-friendly diet and getting sufficient exercise will certainly help with weight loss.
- 9. Find ways to relax:** I'll be the first to admit that this is a particularly difficult task when your life revolves around trying to conceive. I always hated when people would tell me to just relax... but it does help for you to get plenty of rest, pray/meditate/visualize, enjoy relaxing forms of exercise, and do whatever makes you feel happy and peaceful. Reduce your working hours if you can, slow down your business travel schedule, and take proper vacations/holidays to help you reduce stress and promote relaxation. Work with a hypnotherapist to help you learn self-hypnosis to promote a relaxed, fertile state of body and mind.
- 10. BELIEVE:** Believe in miracles and stay focused on your dream of becoming a mother. You may find yourself feeling discouraged and downtrodden, focusing on lab results, failed treatments, and all of the "obstacles" in your path to motherhood. Sometimes giving up feels like the easiest, least painful option, but this is just another opportunity to re-visit your dreams, breathe new life into them, and trust that God/your Higher Power will answer your prayers in the perfect way, in the perfect timing. Just keep believing, keep showing up, keep taking care of yourself. When you need some encouragement, you can always contact me for support. I also like to read the success stories on these websites whenever I need hope or encouragement: www.mothers35plus.co.uk and www.fertileheart.com.

Please note that the tips listed above are based on my personal experience-- I'm not a medical doctor and none of my advice above should be construed as medical advice. Please consult your doctor before commencing any treatments, medications, or supplements. If you'd like to know more about my personal journey to motherhood, please email me at christina@shedreamsbig.com. I'm happy to share my story with you, answer your questions, and also pray for you and your partner.

Sending you lots of love, prayers and BABY DUST!