

5 Key Strategies To Elevate Your Fertility

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Hey, we are your co-hosts of the Beyond Infertility Summit.

Carrie Jones, ND, FABNE, MPH

Dr. Carrie.

Aumatma Simmons, ND, FABNE, MS

Dr. Aumatma. We have an incredible lineup of speakers for you.

Carrie Jones, ND, FABNE, MPH

In addition, Dr. Aumatma and I have created a mini crash course for you.

Aumatma Simmons, ND, FABNE, MS

Every day, you can expect a mini-lecture from us covering foundational content, helping you gain context and insight before deep diving into the day's interviews.

Carrie Jones, ND, FABNE, MPH

We hope that this will serve as a helpful context to get a deeper understanding through the day's interviews.

Aumatma Simmons, ND, FABNE, MS

Hello, and welcome back to the Beyond Infertility Summit. I'm your host, Dr. Aumatma and today we are talking about the Top-5 research-backed things to do to optimize your fertility. Let's get into it. I thought of this as the low-hanging fruit or the things that you're going to do that are going to get the most return on your investment of time, energy, and resources. All of the things and most of the things that I've selected here are relatively easy and inexpensive, and they're going to make a huge difference on your fertility journey.

If you are well along on your journey and if you've been following me for a while, you may already have heard me talk about these things. But today we're going to talk about the key things that are going to get you the most, biggest return on your investment. Let's get into it, and I'm going to go backward. Number one is going to be at the end, and you're going to have to wait to hear that one.

Number five: Is to get rid of toxins. You have heard this a million times, probably from a million different practitioners, but toxins are honestly the number one contributing factor to declining fertility in men and women. We see it in men the most because there is a lot of data that has shown that sperm counts have essentially gone from what used to be an average of 120 million to an average of 20 million per ejaculate for men. That's a huge decline in the last 70 to 75 years. Similarly, with women, we're seeing a similar decline. We also have lots and lots of research on which toxins are specifically impacting and influencing the decline of fertility, from the aspect of air quality to the aspect of implantation failure. I failed my IVF cycles. There's so much data that's being amassed as far as what every toxin is doing. My mini-course tomorrow is going to go over which toxins. But today, I want you to just have the general concept of getting rid of the toxins.

Number four: Is going to be, to eat a wholesome diet that's rich with antioxidants. We always talk about what all the things are to remove and what all the things are to take away. But a good starting point for most people is to eat whole food. That means if it came in a bag, a box, or a can, maybe don't eat it, or at least don't eat it as much. These are the things that are going to get you results. When you start eating whole food, whether you buy it from the bulk center, the bulk section of the grocery store, or a farmer's market, ideally you're going to get a higher quality of food than the stuff that's prepackaged, making it easier and more convenient. You're going to get more nutrients out of things that are not prepackaged and preprocessed. Do that and then anti-oxidants. We think about antioxidants, usually from fruits. Berries are high in antioxidants, but avocados are also high in essential fatty acids that you need.

There are lots and lots of vegetables that are high in antioxidants, and they're giving you minerals and cofactors to make the hormones at the right time. Eating just a variety is a good starting point. If you're already doing that, what else could I do about this? I would say to focus more on vegetables than fruit. Instead of the eight servings of fruits and vegetables, try to make it 1 to 2 servings of fruit and 6 to 7 servings of vegetables. When you're thinking about what vegetables you want to eat? Eat all the different colors. Don't focus on just kale or collard greens; they are just spinach. They all have different nutrients to offer. Just get a rainbow, and that way, you're covered.

All right, Number three: On this list is to drink adequate amounts of pure water. Most people aren't getting enough water. Yet, water is pretty essential to the transmission of hormones and the production of good cervical fluid and semen. Your partners also need to be drinking high-quality, pure water. What do you think happens to those eggs in your ovaries if they don't

have enough fluid in the fluid-filled sack that they live in? Well, they're probably going to shrivel up and die. That's a very poor visual. But this fluid-filled sac is filled with something called follicular fluid, which is a fluid made of water as a primary substance. Then hormones, electrolytes, antioxidants, and so many other things that are crucial to the development of this follicle or egg that's going to be ovulated.

A lot of people are focused on; what supplements I can take. But you can take all the supplements in the world if they're not making their way into this follicular fluid. That is the sac that surrounds the egg that's going to grow. Guess what? It's probably not going to have an impact on egg quality. Optimizing this fluid is crucial to supporting quality. A lot of people are going to ask me, What's the best water? Usually, tap water is not advisable. I did a whole interview with Warren and The Non-toxic Dad, and he talked about the different types of water, what's the best source, and all of that. But it is essentially one water filtration system that not only takes out the chlorine but also the fluoride medications that are in our water. Just a good-quality purification system, and you want to drink actual water.

Tea, coffee, kombucha—all of those things are not contributing to your water intake because guess what? None of your body functions on tea or coffee. It functions on water. You need essential, pure water. If you don't like the taste of water, I would suggest adding berries to your water or cucumber. I love cucumber and water. A couple of sprigs of mint, and thyme. Those are all great. Guess what? You're adding antioxidants to your water when you do stuff like that. That's another way to supercharge your water. You could also if you need more minerals, add a little pinch of high-quality Celtic Sea Salt to your water to make sure that you're getting high-quality minerals into that water. That's supporting that electrolyte balance, which is how things in our body move, connect, and communicate. Those are all the things that I would suggest doing.

Number two: Is going to optimize mitochondrial function. Mitochondria are essentially the energy powerhouses in our body, and the ovaries are energy houses on steroids because they have a thousand mitochondria per ovary. That's a lot of mitochondria. If that wasn't enough, one spermatozoa has 50 to 75 mitochondria. Mitochondria are essentially the backbone of our DNA and our energy. How well is the quality of this thing that our body is producing? If it doesn't have healthy, high-functioning mitochondria, it's probably not going to do a great job producing what you need to create another human.

Then, last but not least, Number one: You guys are going to be a little bit surprised about what I chose for number one. But I feel it is one of the most vital things that we need as part of our system to optimize oxytocin. What the heck is oxytocin? It's one of our crucial hormones. Oxytocin is essentially what I call our safety hormone. It gives our bodies the signal that it's okay to relax because I'm safe. If I feel safe as a female, especially, then I feel it's okay for me to bring a child into this world. If I don't feel safe. It's not something that my body is going to sign up to do.

It is important to optimize oxytocin. What I love about it is that there's no herb, supplement, or other thing that you're going to take. It's essentially a practice that you can do. The research has shown that the best way to improve oxytocin is 10 minutes of eye contact with another human, followed by a 20-second hug. Yes, 10 minutes, followed by 20 seconds. How you do this is essentially up to you and your partner can eye-gaze or you can have a deep conversation face-to-face. That part is the key. You have to be looking into each other's eyes. It's readying your body to release oxytocin, and then the actual physical contact helps to release oxytocin into your system yourself. Soak it up, and your body says you are waiting to get to the point where you can melt and relax.

I know you guys have felt this. It doesn't happen with every hug. You are focusing your energy on, when do I feel you've gotten that release, that stress response, lowering action, and you'll start to feel it; you'll notice it. It's hard to describe, but you will, and I promise you will feel it. You're going for at least 20 seconds. You can do longer hugs if you want, but that is going to be my top tip to support your fertility. The reason this works is because cortisol and stress—all kinds of stress—are not always. My work is stressing me out. All types of stress are going to put your body into fight or flight mode. If you're in fight or flight, you're not having the safety response that tells your body that it's okay to relax and that it's okay to reproduce. The more that we can signal that to our bodies regularly, the more our body is going to kind of neutralize that cortisol with oxytocin.

It's my little hack. I love it. I do it even if we're not trying to get pregnant, because I have a lot of stress, as you can imagine. It's so helpful to have that stress response just being mitigated or neutralized too, with something so simple that doesn't have to do with taking more pills. It's easy to do. Honestly, the side benefits: are you going to have a better relationship? You're going to feel closer to your partner. A lot of times, there is going to be a rise in sexual desire. Those are all good side benefits to add to our fertility journey.

I hope this is helpful. I know this was a little bit longer than usual, but I think that information today is important, and you guys have been asking for it. Here you go. I will talk to you soon. I hope you enjoy this day. There are a lot of amazing lectures coming up, so make sure to tune in for all of our interviews today and write to us. Tell us how it's going. We want to connect with you, and we want to hear what's happening.