

Oreos and Ovulation: How Diet Affects Fertility

It's no secret that what you eat can make a big difference in how you feel. Eating well increases your mood and energy levels, makes it easier to fall and stay asleep, and it can even make it easier to get pregnant. In today's diet-worshipping culture, though, it can be hard to tell which way to eat is best. Should you go keto for carbs? Is Paleo perfect? Do macros make a difference? Turns out that when it comes to fertility, the best way to eat is easier than you think.

Don't Cut Carbs ... But Do Watch Quality

Despite what many diet fads may say, carbs are not the enemy. In fact, they're a very crucial nutrient that your body must have to work its best. When it comes to fertility, [researchers](#) found that it's not the number of carbs you eat but the kind. Simple carbs that the body is able to digest keep your insulin and blood sugar levels higher which can have a negative affect on your fertility, particularly when it comes to ovulation. Sticking to complex, whole grain carbs like whole wheat (not enriched wheat) bread, beans, and vegetables like sweet potatoes keeps your blood sugar levels stable and your ovaries functioning properly.

Fill Up on the Right Fats

While diet culture has largely moved away from low fat offerings as the banner of good health, it can still seem weird that eating more fat can help your fertility, but it's true. The key is in the type of fat. Unsaturated fats help your body maintain regular insulin levels and keep inflammation at bay, both of which are important for good fertility. Trans fats do the exact opposite. Make sure to check labels because trans fats are often found in foods you wouldn't expect because they're used to enhance flavor.

Portion Your Protein

While the total amount of fats and carbs haven't been shown to have a marked affect on fertility, this isn't the case when it comes to protein. The Nurses' Health Study looked at low and high protein intake (77 and 115 grams, respectively) and found that all other factors aside, the women with the highest protein levels had a 41 percent higher change of problems with ovulatory fertility. However, this doesn't mean you should forgo or cut your protein levels because the study also found that the type of protein (seeing a pattern here?) made a difference. Women with high protein intake levels from plant sources were less likely to have fertility issues than women who had low levels of protein from plant sources.

Don't Forget Dad

While much of the focus in infertility seems to revolve around the woman, [30 percent](#) of couples having fertility issues end up being affect by male infertility, and diet can play a role here as well. The bottom line is that your body needs to be fueled properly and working at its best to have optimum fertility, which means focusing on real, whole foods, paying attention to the ingredients and nutritional info for the foods you're eating and getting plenty of exercise.