

COPING ^{with} the STRESS of INFERTILITY.



ANGELINA KOBA

WWW.DEFEATINFERTILITY.COM

COPYING *With*
the **STRESS** *of*
INFERTILITY

ANGELINA KOBA

WWW.DEFEATINFERTILITY.COM

DISCLAIMER

While all attempts have been made to verify information provided in this publication, neither the Author nor the Publisher assumes any responsibility for errors, omissions or contrary interpretations of the subject matter herein. Any perceived slights of specific persons, peoples or organizations are unintentional. The Author neither makes nor attempts to make any diagnosis or cure or prevent any disease.

This publication is an informational product based on the author's own experience and research, has not been evaluated by either the FDA or the medical profession, and is not aimed to replace any advice you may receive from your medical practitioner. The Author and Publisher assume no responsibility or liability whatsoever on the behalf of any purchaser or reader of these materials. The author is not a doctor, not does she claim to be. Please consult your primary care physician before beginning any program of nutrition, exercise, or remedy. By consulting your primary care physician, you will have a better opportunity to understand and address your particular symptoms and situation in the most effective ways possible.

As always, before applying any treatment on attempting anything mentioned in this book, or if you are in doubt, you should consult your physician and use your best judgment. IF you fail to do so, you are acting at your own risk. You, the buyer or reader of this book, alone assume all risk for anything you may learn from this book. **DefeatInfertility.com**, the publisher, **Golden Bow LLC**, and **Angelina Koba** are not liable or responsible for any increase in severity of your condition or for any health problems you may encounter should you give up medical treatment.

By choosing to use the information made available on the **Defeat Your Infertility** website and in this book, you agree to indemnify, defend, and hold harmless **DefeatInfertility.com**, **Golden Bow LLC**, and **Angelina Koba** from all claims (whether valid or invalid), suits, judgments, proceedings, losses, damages, costs and expenses, of any nature whatsoever (including reasonable attorney's fees) for which **DefeatInfertility.com** and **Angelina Koba** may become liable resulting from the use or misuse of any products sold through the **DefeatInfertility.com** website.

COPYRIGHT NOTICE

Copyright Notice

Copyright © Angelina Koba, DefeatInfertility.com, Golden Bow LLC. All rights reserved.

All content contained within the “Dealing With The Stress And Anxiety of Trying To Conceive™” eBook is copyright © 2013 Angelina Koba, Golden Bow LLC.

All literary work contained within “Dealing With The Stress And Anxiety of Trying To Conceive™” belongs to and is the sole property of its author and is reprinted with permission. Reproduction, copying, or any other form of use of the pieces contained within the book is strictly forbidden without express permission from the author, personally. If perjury is discovered, the offenders will be prosecuted to the full extent of the law.

The owner of this eBook is permitted to print one hard copy of this report for personal use. These rules have been established to protect the rights and ownership of the author and to ensure that the work is upheld as the author’s own.

This is NOT a free eBook. You do NOT have resell rights for this eBook. If you purchase this book from anywhere other than DefeatInfertility.com, please report that site to support@DefeatInfertility.com. Thank you for your cooperation.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

The Emotional Aspects of Trying to Conceive	8
The Self-Blame of Infertility	14
Telling Family and Friends	17
The Stress of Infertility	20
Visualization during Your Cycle	22
Coping with Stress	24
Men: Coping with Infertility	26
Depression and Infertility	29
Mindfulness for Depression	31
Mindfulness Technique	33
Building Serenity Skills	36
Importance of Relaxation	37
Progressive Muscle Relaxation (PMR)	37
Keeping a Stress Journal	39
Meditation for Stress Reduction	41
A Simple Meditation	43
Anxiety Relaxation Techniques	45
Committing to Anxiety Relaxation Exercises	47
Visualization Relaxation Technique for Infertility	48
Sleep to Ease Stress	50
Exercise to Reduce Stress	53
Just Get Moving	54
Coping By Letting Go	56
Using Yoga to Combat Stress	59
The Chemistry Behind Stress	59
Yoga Poses for Stress	61

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Herbs to Reduce Stress	67
Herbal Teas	68
Herbal Remedies	70
Conclusion	72



THE EMOTIONAL ASPECTS OF TRYING TO CONCEIVE



One of the most challenging aspects of trying to conceive is dealing with the emotional ups and downs relating to not getting pregnant. It's important to learn how to take care of yourself and get the support you need during this trying time. You need to find ways to manage your emotions so that your self-confidence and viewpoint on life remains as positive as possible. As month after month goes by and you're still not pregnant, both you and your partner will start to experience a feeling of loss and disappointment. You may feel as though having a baby is now out of your control. Whether you're trying to conceive naturally, or going through ART (Assisted Reproductive Technology), you'll be dealing with some very strong emotions that most of the time, aren't too positive. Many couples feel as though their lives have shattered.

Even if your mind isn't knowingly thinking about why you're not getting pregnant, your unconscious mind and your body might be responding to feelings of frustration, anger, and

even grief. Many people have some of the following symptoms when they first realize that they're having fertility problems:

Lack of energy, particularly on those days when they're waiting for the results of a pregnancy test.

- Headaches.
- Irritability.
- Difficulty sleeping.
- Extreme feelings of sadness.
- Inability to concentrate.

When you're trying to get pregnant, it can be natural to focus all your attention on what's happening to your body. Unfortunately, the rest of the world isn't going to stop. It's important that you learn to cope with the anxiety, stress, and sadness that you're feeling at this time. Coping is going to rely on a great deal of courage and resourcefulness. If you give in to the grief that you're feeling, you'll only be giving negative emotions energy and focus that you can't afford to give away. There's no denying that infertility is difficult to live through. However, you can't let it consume you and take away your personal power.

COUPLES: COPING WITH INFERTILITY

It's important to deal with the emotional strain of infertility with a united front. You and your partner need to discuss and agree upon the issues of your fertility problems, such as the diagnosis, the treatment, and what you're doing to work through these issues. With time, patience, knowledge, and coping skills, you and your partner will be able to survive this difficult time in your lives.

Most people just think that when the time is right, they will just decide to have children and will get pregnant soon after they stop using birth control. As each fertility cycle goes by,

the anticipation that you felt at the beginning of this process is replaced by anxiety. You are likely to feel astonishment and dismay when you realize that you can't conceive as easily as you thought you would. Many couples believe that if they work hard enough and put all their focus and attention into getting pregnant, that they will just become pregnant very soon. Many couples struggle with denial, not even wanting to admit to each other that they might have a problem. Questions will start to come to the surface. What if we can't ever have children? Could we be infertile? Is it my fault? It's typical for you to go through a wide range of emotions before really acknowledging that you might have a fertility problem.

Women are often the first to realize that a fertility problem might exist. Many women are aware for a long period of time that there is a problem, before expressing concerns to their partner. When she finally mentions the possibility of a problem, many men attempt to discourage her thinking and want her to doubt her gut feelings.

At first, most men need to be convinced that medical intervention of any kind might be required. This is particularly true if the woman has been feeling that there is a problem for a few months and just hasn't said anything. By now, she's had a bit of time to think about medical problems. Most of us believe that "reproduction" is our natural right and that we can't possibly have any problems with what so many other couples have already succeeded at.

This is the time when feelings of anger, guilt, denial, fear, self-pity, and frustration will start to show up. Feelings of guilt and blame are most men's response to fertility problems. It seems that society has conditioned us so that we think of the man as being always fertile. Women seem to feel more denial and anger when they first realize they're having problems.

Emotions and differences in your marriage can become overstated. This is true of any crisis that you would be going through, however it seems that infertility problems are at

the top of the list when it comes to stressful life events that couples go through. It's important that you don't live in the cycle of denial that infertility isn't going to affect your relationship. Accept that infertility is going to cause confusion, doubt, fear, and pain in your life. Both you and your partner will struggle through fertility in many different ways and different stages. It's imperative that to survive infertility, you rely on each other and find ways to cope with the stress and anxiety.

Communication with other couples who are or have experienced difficulty getting pregnant will help you recognize that you're not alone. Remember to keep in mind that everyone is unique and your situation won't be exactly like anyone else's. Find an infertility group in your area where you can go to talk about what you're going through. If your partner won't go with you, consider going alone. What you learn from other couples will help you cope with your infertility, and eventually your partner will start to notice that your coping skills seem to be better than their own.

Be prepared that your feelings and your partner's feelings won't always be the same at the same time. You'll go through a variety of different emotions and stages in this process of infertility. You need to be understanding with your partner. Accept that your thoughts and feelings will change as frequently as will your partner's will as well.

You can expect to feel a combination of fear and anxiety as you work through your infertility issues. The key to dealing effectively with infertility is to be as informed as you can all the time about what's happening. Learn what you can about your own case. Educate yourself about your options. Never deny what you're feeling both physically and emotionally. After all, you know your body better than anyone.

Communication with your partner is crucial during this time. This can sometimes be difficult, but it's important to stay in touch and on the same page when it comes to what each of you is going through. This is the same case with your healthcare provider, whether you choose a Western doctor

or choose Eastern medicine. You have to reliably express yourself to your partner and your doctor about whatever you're thinking and feeling.

Try to redirect and focus your thoughts on the positive things in your life. Don't let the struggle to have a baby consume you in all ways. It is important to keep a healthy perspective on what's happening and continue to grow, not only as an individual, but also to grow within your relationship with your partner.

THE ANGER OF INFERTILITY

Anger typically results from feeling defenseless or helpless, or both. Helpless feelings are the result of the lack of control that you might feel over your infertility, your body, and your future. For many people, not being able to get pregnant is a new experience for them. Perhaps you've achieved all the other goals that you've set out for yourself? Now you really want to be pregnant and you're doing everything you can to conceive, but so far you've not succeeded. This can lead to a feeling of defenselessness. You might feel as if you can no longer count on anything wonderful happening to you.

If you let it, anger can completely take over your life. Anger can cloud your everyday thoughts and experiences. You might feel as though you're in an emotional limbo, pulled between tears and sadness, or rage and anger. The next time you feel angry or overwhelming sad, take an inventory of your body. How are the different parts of your body responding to these feelings? Perhaps your heart starts to beat quicker. Or perhaps your breathing becomes faster.

Take some time to notice how your body physically reacts to these powerful emotions. Anger is a very normal and typical response to infertility. Most couples who are having problems conceiving will go through these angry feelings. It's natural to be angry when something that you want so much seems to be completely out of your reach.

FEELINGS OF GUILT AND SHAME

Shame is an intense, painful feeling connected with a loss of self-esteem. Shame is also the result of feeling inadequate, helpless, and at fault. All of these feelings are connected to infertility. As you and your partner repeatedly fail to conceive, you may start to realize that what you want so much may in fact never be attained. Your self-worth may start to take a beating. It can be far too easy to start feeling as though you're a failure. Sadness, self-doubt, and guilt will start to converge as you and your partner begin to think of yourselves as failing not only to get pregnant, but failing each other.

You may also feel that you're failing your parents, as well as other family members, and friends. You may not even be aware that you're feeling some hidden feelings of shame. If you don't learn how to cope with these intense feelings of guilt and shame, you'll quickly allow these emotions to take over your life. This can adversely affect your fertility even further. You need to be emotionally healthy to boost your fertility as much as you can.

Our goal is to reach the point where you can accept what's happening and not see it as a personal failure. Then you won't give power to these feelings of shame. The techniques in this report will give you the tools you need to learn to accept your limits and deal with the stress and anxiety of trying to conceive.

THE SELF-BLAME OF INFERTILITY



When you and your partner are dealing with infertility, the challenge is to stop blaming yourselves so that you can manage your stress. Not getting pregnant after a year or more of trying can lead to anxiety, stress, depression, and other psychological problems. It can trigger feelings of failure and shame when you feel that you're not achieving something that you really want. Infertility can strain relationships.

Many couples struggle with difficult decisions about what they want to do to try to get pregnant. Do you want to try Western medicine and ART (Assisted Reproductive Technology)? Or do you want to try natural ways to treat your infertility by using Eastern medicine? These types of decisions come with their own challenges.

When it comes to not being able to conceive, women often feel anxious and sad. You may find that your self-esteem is very low. You feel hopeless and helpless about ever having

the family you so desperately want. It's important that you identify and disassemble the dysfunctional messages you're hearing both from yourself and from others, such as your partner or family members. Women often convince themselves that they're not real women if they can't have biological children.

Society seems to be sending the message that women are often to be blamed for their own infertility. Women are labeled as being a Type A personality and therefore this is preventing them from getting pregnant. Or they're told that they should have thought about getting pregnant when they were younger. You need to fight these messages and not allow them to get into your head. Neither you nor your partner is to blame for your problems conceiving. There are biological factors that are hindering conception. Thinking otherwise is going to keep you in the cycle of self-blame.

Make sure that your partner isn't overlooked when it comes to the blame-game. Men are just as likely to contribute to infertility as women are. Yet for some reason, most of the psychological information on infertility is focused on women. Many men feel that being infertile cuts into their feelings of masculinity. These feelings can lead to embarrassment, shame, and increased stress. Some men will also be concerned about their inability to continue the genetic line of their family.

Performance anxiety can become a big issue for your partner, particularly if you're having sex on a schedule when you're most fertile. Sex becomes a requirement, and not a loving and spontaneous act. It can be easy for your partner to blame himself when he can't perform in the bedroom. It's important that he knows that many couples with fertility problems also go through these problems.

Infertility can often change the dynamics of your relationship. The stress of not being able to have a baby can lead to difficulty communicating. You may find that you and your partner aren't on the same page when it comes to dealing with your infertility. All of these are stressors that can affect

your mind and body at a time when you're trying to [boost your fertility](#), not inhibit it even further. It's not easy to live with the reality of infertility; however you're not to blame in any way for what's happening to you and your partner.



TELLING FAMILY AND FRIENDS



Even though infertility is considered to be a crisis for individuals and couples, it's also an ordeal that impacts their families and close friends. Unfortunately, infertility has the ability to strain family relationships and make it difficult for your other family members and close friends to know what to say to you. At the same time, it's also very hard for you to know what to say when others know that you're trying to have a baby and yet aren't getting pregnant. You may be feeling jealous over the pregnancy of a sibling. Or perhaps you feel the pressure your parents are putting on you to give them a grandchild. Regardless of the circumstances, fertility problems can leave you feeling isolated and lonely.

Some of your family and friends may be handling your infertility in negative ways, such as blaming you or avoiding talking about your situation at all. If you haven't told anyone that you're trying to conceive, then you may constantly be asked "When are you going to start a family?" These ques-

tions will be unavoidable, since we live in a society where everyone just expects that couples will want to have children. There are some things that you can do to make it easier when it comes to letting family and friends know about your difficulty getting pregnant.

HONESTY: It may seem easier to keep your struggle to have a baby to yourself, but this is an exhausting and emotional time in your life. It's very important that you have the support and love of your family and friends to help you through it. You don't need to tell everyone what's happening, just those people you feel you need the support from. It's critical that you and your partner have someone you can turn to on those days when your pregnancy test comes back negative. However, be prepared for some negative reactions. Not everyone you tell is going to react the way you expect them to.

KEEP IT SIMPLE: It's natural for people to ask why you're having problems getting pregnant. You don't have to tell them anything, but if you feel that you want to then keep it simple. You don't need to go into a big explanation of what's happening. If they persist with asking too many questions you can politely tell them that you'd rather that some things about your situation remain private. Your family and close friends will certainly be able to understand this.

BE PREPARED FOR DUMB COMMENTS: When people know that you're having fertility problems, most of the time they can't help but make some silly comments and offer their advice. Some people will say that maybe you're just not meant to be parents. Others will give you advice on what to do to get pregnant. Still others will tell you to just relax. In order to cope with these comments, and not let them get to you, you need to just learn to nod your head and agree. Your own emotional well-being is what's important right now, so don't let what others say have an effect on your thoughts and emotions.

FIND NEW FRIENDS: There are other couples out there who are struggling with fertility problems just like you are. These people can provide you with the best support possible at this time. Find a support group in the area where you live, or find an online support group. It can help to talk to other women and men who are dealing everyday with the heartbreak of infertility. You'll be able to support each other through some bad days when your "fertile" friends won't know what to say.

FOR FAMILY MEMBERS

This section has been written specially for your family members and close friends to provide them with information on handling your fertility problems. You need to acknowledge infertility as an emotional crisis that deals with loss, disappointment, and fear. Don't try to negate or minimize infertility either by avoiding the subject or giving hollow platitudes such as, "Everything will turn out fine" or "Just relax and you'll get pregnant".

Don't give uninvited advice and never judge by taking sides or blaming. Be sensitive to the emotional turmoil, stress, and pain of infertility. If you don't know what to say, then it's usually best to say nothing at all. Ask what you can say or do that might be helpful at this time. Show that you care and are compassionate. Try to be support, even if this just means offering a shoulder to cry on.

THE STRESS OF INFERTILITY



None of us can live a life without any stress at all. Our bodies and minds are designed to cope with a certain amount of stress, at least up to a certain point. Chronic stress, on the other hand, will compromise your health and your fertility. You need to find ways to manage this stress or learn how to diffuse it. You need to find out what works for you, and then go and do it. There are many different stress management methods and techniques that you can try. Some of these methods are outlined in this report.

You also need to take a close look at your current habits to see if you're negatively handling stress as you try to conceive. Some women, for example, overeat or over-exercise to deal with stress. They are doing this either consciously or unconsciously. Either way, both overeating and too much exercise can lead to fertility problems. Perhaps you deal with stress by drinking coffee all day or having a couple of glasses of wine at night? However you deal with stress, you

should be managing it directly, and not covering it up with coping strategies that are nothing more than bad habits.

Dealing with fertility problems brings about its own kind of stress. Research shows that using “mindful” practices to manage the stress of infertility is very effective in helping you to get pregnant naturally and without the use of ARTs (Assisted Reproductive Technology).

REDUCING STRESS DURING YOUR CYCLE

Eastern medicine believes that where you put your mind, the qi (life energy) will follow. When you're trying to get pregnant it's important that you [maximize your fertility](#) during each of the four phases of your cycle. Having a healthy mind, as well as a healthy body, is essential for your fertility. There are some things that you can do to reduce stress and anxiety during these four phases. Make sure that you have some “me” time at some point during the day.

MENSTRUATION: During this phase of your cycle, your energy will be at its lowest. You need to focus on resting and relaxing your body so that your energy is regenerated. It's natural for most women to feel a bit antisocial and withdrawn at this time. Rather than forcing yourself to go out and do things, give yourself permission to stay home and pamper yourself. There is also the disappointment that you need to deal with, now that your period is here again and you're still not pregnant. You need to accept this instead of allowing disappointment and worry to take over. Accept that for now, you're not pregnant, and start making plans for your next cycle.

PRE-OVULATION: The rise in estrogen levels in your body will naturally put you in a better mood. Many women feel a renewed feeling of optimism and hope now that their fertility cycle begins again. You may feel that your energy is highest at this time of the month. It's also a time when you might be feeling more attractive and sexier. Try to take advantage of this time. The stress and anxiety of trying to get

pregnant can become very intense, so think of this time in your cycle as a bit of a break. This is a good time for you and your partner to connect and spend some time together. Go out on a date and try not to spend all your time talking about getting pregnant. Make love even though this isn't the most fertile time of your month. Even a walk is going to reduce some of the stress that you're feeling.

OVULATION: Most women continue to feel positive and have an overall feeling of well-being when they're ovulating. This is due to the increase in hormones, such as estrogen, LH, and FSH. You might also feel anxious during this time if you start to focus on the fact that your window of fertility is so small during each of your cycles. This pressure can put a lot of stress and pressure on both you and your partner. Some men will experience performance anxiety during this time, which will only add to their stress. The best thing you can do during this phase of your cycle is to enjoy having regular sex. Take care of any other issues in your life that you DO have control of. Then try to relax and know that you're doing the best that you can.

POSSIBLE IMPLANTATION: This part of your cycle can be the most difficult to deal with emotionally. You'll most likely be feeling a lot of anxiety, wondering if you're pregnant or if your period is going to appear once again. When you've finished ovulating, those optimistic feelings may start to subside. You start to feel pensive and brooding. You need to focus on staying calm and thinking of getting pregnant as a process that might not be achieved in just one cycle.

VISUALIZATION DURING YOUR CYCLE

It's important that you take a few minutes every day to feel good about your body and to center yourself. This will greatly benefit your health, your mind, and your fertility. The aim here is to shift your focus during each phase of your cycle. The following will help guide you through your visualization:

- Comfortably sit in a chair with your feet on the floor.
- Take a deep breath and allow your abdomen to expand. When you inhale, think of breathing light and energy into your body.
- Exhale your breath, pulling in your abdomen as you do so. When you exhale, think of breathing light and energy out of your body.
- Continue to breathe in and out until you feel as though you're completely surrounded by light and energy.
- Now draw your attention inward, focusing on each phase the your cycle you're in, as directed in the next section. Continue with this visualization for a few minutes.
- Finish your visualization by imagining yourself standing underneath a waterfall. Think of the clean and clear water falling over and through you. As the water flows, it takes with it all your stress, worry, and frustration about getting pregnant.
- Slowly open your eyes.

THE FOCUS FOR YOUR VISUALIZATION FOR EACH DIFFERENT PHASE IS AS FOLLOWS:

Menstruation Visualization: Turn your mind inward and focus on your uterus. Think of the lining in your uterus as it easily sheds and leaves behind a smooth surface. Visualize blood flowing to your uterus through the blood vessels, replenishing it with a fresh new supply of blood.

Pre-ovulation Visualization: Turn your mind inward and focus on your ovaries. Imagine that there are many follicles that are growing on your ovaries. Now just focus on just one of these follicles and imagine it receiving all the energy and nurturing from your body that it needs to be healthy.

Ovulation Visualization: Turn your mind inward and focus on one follicle on your ovaries. Think of the egg as it's released from the follicle. Visualize the egg as it's picked up by the hair-like structures on one end of your fallopian tube. Imagine the egg being met by one of your partner's sperm. Then visualize the fertilized egg traveling up to your uterus.

Possible Implantation Visualization: Turn your mind inward and focus on your uterus. Think of the embryo reaching your uterus and implanting itself deep into the uterine lining. Visualize the embryo being nurtured by the blood supply of your uterus. Now turn your mind back to your ovaries. Think of the ruptured follicle as it releases progesterone into your body to sustain your pregnancy.

COPING WITH STRESS

Going through fertility problems can be an extremely stressful time. You'll be faced with many uncertainties and concerns, as well as many fears and tears. This report is all about learning effective ways to cope with all the negative emotions and thoughts that can decrease your chances of getting pregnant. You need to gain control of your emotional health so that your body and mind are strong enough to go through this difficult time.

One of the most significant things you can do to reduce stress, is to talk with your partner. After all, you're not going through this alone. Many couples, who have been through the stress of infertility, say that their relationship has grown stronger because of what they've gone through together. By joining support groups, you can also talk to couples who have experienced infertility. They can share their own personal stories about how they learned to cope with the stress and negative emotions of infertility.

For some people, stress can happen when you don't have all the correct information. Learn as much as you can about your own personal situation. Knowledge is empowerment. When you're knowledgeable about your situation, you can

gain a feeling of control that will help you to make educated decisions about your fertility treatment. Some of this information can be shared with your other family members so they have a better understanding of what you're going through.

Your day to day life can be less stressful if you do some of the following:

- Learn to identify your feelings and then write them down in a journal. Share these feelings with your partner.
- Identify some of the other sources of stress that you have in your life. From this list, try to resolve some of these stresses that you don't need at this time in your life.
- [Exercise](#) every day to relieve tension.
- Avoid drinking too many caffeinated foods, such as coffee, tea, and chocolate.
- Get enough rest and sleep every day.
- Use some of the [relaxation](#) techniques in this report to lessen your stress.
- Talk to your partner about other things besides your fertility problems.
- Be realistic about what's happening to you and know that you're doing the best that you can do.

MEN: COPING WITH INFERTILITY



The infertility support community infrequently focuses on men. However, men are dealing with their own infertility issues just the way women are. While some of the stresses and anxieties are the same for both women and men, there are some differences in the ways that men cope. Some of the thoughts and feelings that men often go through when they're unable to conceive include:

- I feel like I'm a failure.
- I can't believe this is happening to me.
- I can't provide my partner with what she really wants.
- I need to be the man and be strong for my partner.
- I can deal with this just fine on my own.

Men need to find ways to cope with the infertility that they're going through. Not dealing with the anxiety and stress of not being able to get pregnant can negatively impact their own fertility and can also lead to problems in their relationship

with their partner. Even though you might be feeling like a failure, or that you're dealing with things just fine, you'll benefit greatly from infertility support.

TALK ABOUT YOUR FEELINGS. When you're diagnosed with male infertility, it can feel like a disastrous loss. You might think that you can tough it out and refuse to get help from anyone else. For some men, this is the way they deal with their problems. However, this isn't the time to be on your own. It's alright to let yourself mourn. When coping with fertility problems, keep your communication with your partner wide open. Being able to communicate will allow you to talk about your feelings instead of keeping them down deep inside. If you're having trouble talking to your partner about everything that you're feeling, a therapy group might be beneficial. Talking with other men about what you're going through can help you feel less alone. Or perhaps one on one with a counselor will work better for you if you're uncomfortable opening up in front of a group.

There are some definite signs that you need to watch out for when you're dealing with infertility that are going to require that you get some help. This includes:

- Abusing drugs or alcohol.
- Acting angry, bad-tempered, or abusive
- Engaging in any type of risky behavior.
- Having suicidal thoughts.
- Feeling depressed or less interested in things that you used to enjoy.
- Feeling tired most of the time.
- Sleeping too much.
- Having trouble sleeping.

If the above symptoms persist most of the day, or for a few days of the week, make sure that you talk to your doctor. These are not signs of a not being able to cope with infertility, they're danger signs that you can't afford to ignore.

Finding healthy coping skills. We all deal with stress differently. Some men cope with it naturally and are more resilient to stress than others. Other men can let infertility stress build up until it bursts. Don't be ashamed if you fall into the second category. When infertility gets the best of you, try to find coping skills that work for you, such as the following:

- Exercise. Being active a few times a week will let you physically cope with stress. Swim, run, [lift weights, do yoga](#), or bike. Find an activity that works for you.
- Find ways to relax. This can mean tai chi, yoga, getting a massage, or just spending time with the guys forgetting about infertility for just a while.

GET THE RIGHT AMOUNT OF SLEEP FOR YOU.

Find a creative outlet to express your feelings and thoughts about infertility. This can mean writing about what's happening to you, or it might be something as simple as learning how to draw or paint.

Find ways to add humor and laughter to your life. It's important that you enjoy the good things in life and don't just allow yourself to get lost in the pain of infertility.

It seems as though society thinks of infertility as being just a female problem, but of course it's not. When you're in a relationship, not being to conceive affects both of you in equal measure. Male infertility is behind one third to half of all infertility problems. It's important that both of you find ways to cope with what's happening in your lives.

DEPRESSION AND INFERTILITY



Infertility can be very hard to deal with. Infertility problems are often associated with numerous different tests and this can lead to a variety of different emotions that you have to deal with on a daily basis. Both women and men go through all of those emotions and negative thoughts that are linked to infertility. Having to deal with these emotions can cause mild to severe depression. This depression can then cause numerous physical side effects and put a strain on all areas of your life. This includes relationships, work, and your enjoyment of daily life. While medication can be an effective treatment for depression, when you're trying to get pregnant the last thing you want is to be prescribed medication. This is a time when you're trying to get your body and mind as healthy as possible so that you can conceive as naturally as possible.

Even though it's common for most people to experience sadness when they're going through infertility problems,

some often go through a more serious indicator of the psychological ordeal when trying to deal with infertility. This can manifest itself as depression. Feeling times of sadness is normal, particularly when you're having your menstrual period. This sadness however, does disappear and usually won't interfere too much in your daily life. Depression, on the other hand, is continuous and will start to interfere even in the most routine of your daily tasks.

Some common symptoms of depression include:

- Feelings of doom and helplessness.
- Difficulty in sleeping or sleeping too much.
- Persistent feelings of anxiety and worry.
- Loss or decrease in appetite.
- Eating too much.
- Wanting to be alone and not wanting to interact with other people.
- Thoughts of suicide.
- No interest in sex.
- Not doing things that previously made you happy.

Not all people who are dealing with infertility will go through depression. There are risk factors that can increase your chances of depression. This includes a previous history of depression, a family history of depression, and how long you've been going through infertility. Depression could either be caused by one of these risk factors alone or it can be a combination of them.

Depression can take a very negative toll on your emotional and physical wellbeing when you're trying to get pregnant. It can also affect your relationship with your partner, especially during this traumatic time. This is why it's very important to get help for depression. There are some things that you can do to deal with your depression if you're going through some of the milder symptoms. Feelings of suicide and constant sadness mean that you need to ask for professional help.

MINDFULNESS FOR DEPRESSION

Mindfulness is the awareness that comes about through paying attention on purpose. You do this in the present moment, in a non-judgmental way to the way things are in your life. Practicing mindfulness can help you cope with depression when you're trying to conceive, so that you can function in your life without succumbing to the depression that can occur when you're dealing with infertility problems.

There are some key things that you need to understand when it comes to infertility and depression. When you become depressed once, it builds pathways in your brain that make it easier and quicker for you to have a re-occurrence in the future. Once the serious event of infertility finds a path through your brain, then even small negative events in your life can lead down that same path. This is why you need to deal with depression before it hits.

One of the major causes of depression is trying to fix the problem of infertility. While it seems like the logical thing to do – to fix what's stopping you from getting pregnant – it's not always as easy as that. By now, you know this. When the problem isn't fixed, the feeling of powerlessness and helplessness can leave you feeling sad and futile.

When depression starts to pull you down you may react, for very understandable reasons, by trying to get rid of your feelings, or ignoring them, by suppressing them. Or you might try to think your way out of these feelings. During this suppressing of feelings we often bring up other sad feelings of past regrets. Or perhaps we invent future worries. In your mind you're coming up with this solution and then that solution for why you can't conceive. It doesn't take long before you start to feel bad for not being able to come up with a way to ease the painful emotions you're feeling.

You can easily get lost in comparison between where you actually are and where you want to be. In the case of infertility, you can start to focus too much on the failure of getting pregnant and these feelings of failure can quickly start to fill your head. This can lead to depression.

Depression can be caused by a distance between what is going on right now in your life and what you think should be happening. For instance, you might be sad about not being pregnant when what you really want to be is thrilled that you're pregnant. This is when you can become opposed to your current feelings and try to ignore them, when they should be acknowledged. This unfortunately brings up more sadness and negative emotions about where you are right now in your life. Your mind is trying desperately to do something to fix your infertility. You need to learn to accept where you are and just let yourself be aware of your emotions instead of thinking that you need to react to them.

You can do this by learning how to become “mindful” and just “be”. When you're in this “mindful” state, you can stop evaluating what you're going through in terms of “how things should be” or whether you're doing all you can to solve your fertility problems. Infertility doesn't mean that you're a failure. As hard as it is, you need to embrace the reality that for right now, you're not pregnant. In this present moment there is no hidden agenda. Your world is not falling apart around you. You are not powerless. Acknowledging this can be a relief to your body and mind.

Mindfulness is made up of a number of skills. Each of these skills will require practice:

AWARENESS: One of the skills of mindfulness is learning how to focus your attention on just one thing at a time. You need to learn how to become aware of all the things that are going on around you, such as sounds and sights. You also need to recognize the things that are going on inside you, such as your feelings and thoughts.

Non-judgmental and Non-evaluative Observation: This skill focuses you on looking at your own experience of infertility in a non-judgmental way. Think of your infertility in an objective way instead of labeling it as being a “bad” thing. An important part of this skill is having self-compassion for yourself and that fact that you’re not pregnant.

Being in the “Now” Moment: Part of mindfulness is being in the present moment instead of being caught up in the emotions and thoughts of your past. You also need to stop worrying about the future. You have stop worrying about what’s going to happen if you’re never able to get pregnant. You need to accept that you’re an active participant in your fertility problems and stop going through the motions of feeling powerless.

MINDFULNESS TECHNIQUE

So, how do you go about practicing mindfulness meditation? There are different techniques, but here is one one form of basic mindfulness exercise for you to try. There are three basic areas that are focused on and worked with in this meditation technique: body, breath and mind. First, you relate with your body. This includes how you set up the environment around you. In this meditation, you’ll be using an eyes-open practice. This is why what’s in front of you is going to matter.

Choose an area of your home where you can set up a quiet space, such a corner of a room where you feel peaceful. If you like, you can create an altar of some kind and adorn it with pictures and objects that hold a special meaning to you. You might want to light a few [candles and incense](#) to create even more of a relaxing atmosphere. Or you just might want to have a blank wall in front of you. Just make sure that you’re not sitting with something distracting in front of you, such as the television or your computer screen.

Once you’ve chosen a spot, decide how you want to sit. You can sit on the floor, on a cushion, or in a chair. You want

to sit so that you're comfortable and not wriggling around. You're going to be sitting for a while so take the time to make your environment as relaxing as possible. Sit in a posture that upright but not too rigid. Let your hands rest on your thighs, facing down. Keep your eyes somewhat open, with your gaze on the floor in front of you, about four to five feet away. Keep your gaze but slightly focused. The point here is that what's in front of you at this time is what's in front of you. You need to be in the "now" moment. Let your gaze rest where it lands.

Your back should be strong and straight as you sit. Start by sitting in this posture for a few minutes in this peaceful environment. If your attention starts to wander away, just gently pull it back to your body and the room that you're in. Your mind is going to wander. This is what happens in mindfulness. Don't be disappointed when this happens. Just gently come back again to your body and the room.

The second part of this exercise is working with your breath. Rest your attention lightly on your breath. Feel your breath as it comes into your body and then as it goes out. There's no special technique to your breathing during this exercise. What matters here is how you already are, how you're already breathing without having to manipulate it. If you find that you're already controlling your breath and breathing evenly in and out, then just continue this process.

Sit for a few minutes with your posture, the environment around you, and your breath. Breathe in and out, in and out. Don't focus on your breath, but rather naturally focus on being in the moment. You don't want to channel all your attention on your breath otherwise this will just become a breathing exercise.

The last part of this exercise is working with your thoughts. As you sit, you'll notice that thoughts are naturally in your mind. Sometimes there will be a lot of thoughts: thoughts about the past, the present, and the future. No doubt you'll be thinking about the fact that you're not yet pregnant. There might seem to be no gaps at all in your thoughts and you'll

find it hard to even notice your breath. That's not unusual, particularly if you're new to this mindful meditation. Just try to be aware when it happens.

When you start to notice that you have gotten so caught up in your thoughts that you've forgotten that you're even sitting there, then slowly and gently bring yourself back to your breath. You can mentally say the word "thoughts" to give yourself a reminder of what has just happened. This is just a neutral observation to yourself that you've been thinking.

How long should you practice mindfulness? If you are new to this exercise, then just try to sit for about 10 to 15 minutes. As you practice more, you can gradually increase to 20 or 30 minutes. Ultimately, you could extend it to 45 minutes to an hour. If you want to sit in mindfulness longer, then you might want to learn how to do a walking meditation, which will be easier on your body.

Perhaps the most important thing about mindfulness meditation is about practicing being mindful of whatever is happening right now. It's NOT about getting yourself to stop thinking. It's easy to fall into the trap of thinking that's the goal behind meditation. You're supposed to notice your thinking. Don't attempt to get rid of your thoughts, whether they are negative or not. This just won't work and it's contrary to the spirit of this practice. You're trying to be with yourself as you already are and not trying to change yourself into something else. Practicing mindfulness is one way that you can deal with depression.

BUILDING SERENITY SKILLS



Deciding to have a baby seems like it should be an easy thing to do. However, for many couples, pregnancy doesn't happen as quickly as they would like. This can lead to a great deal of stress and anxiety. Often times, you also have to deal with friends and family members asking you if you're pregnant yet. This can increase the levels of worry that you're already feeling. When you suffer from anxiety, your body and mind, which are bound together, will overreact to certain situations. In your case this would be the fertility problems that you're experiencing. When you overreact, your body and mind will respond in inappropriate ways. Both physical and mental stress will negatively affect your fertility and it may take you even longer to conceive.

What typically happens when you're suffering from anxiety is that you react with a flight-or-fight response. Your mind will start to misinterpret what's really happening in your life. Even though you may think that you're dealing quite

well with your fertility issues, your subconscious is in fact reacting in fear. It's this fear that is going to negatively affect your overall health. The hormones in your body are going to be out of balance as the pituitary glands start to release stress hormones. This imbalance in your hormones is going to affect your health and your fertility. This is why it's imperative that you learn ways to manage the stress and fear that you're going through at this time in your life.

IMPORTANCE OF RELAXATION

It's important that you learn how to relax and still your mind so that you can manage your stress. When you're going through the unhealthy anxiety of trying to get pregnant, your nervous system will go into overdrive as it tries to cope with the fear that you're feeling. Even though infertility is a very real threat to you, you still need to learn how to cope with this stress so that you're as healthy as possible. Try to think of a relaxation practice as a way for you to find a safe place inside of you. This practice will help you to tune out the pressures and anxiety that you're feeling as you try to get pregnant. Think of relaxation exercises as a way to build serenity in your life. Relaxation will help you to cope with anything that comes along in your life. Serenity skills will help you calm down and feel more in control of your life. There are many different types of relaxation techniques that are proven to be successful to calm your body and mind. One of these techniques is progressive muscle relaxation.

PROGRESSIVE MUSCLE RELAXATION (PMR)

PMR is ideal for those people whose anxiety is manifesting itself in physical symptoms such as pelvic pain, headaches, inflammatory conditions, and infertility. [PMR](#) is a technique that is used to gain a deep relaxation by tensing and then releasing certain muscle groups in your body. When you're trying to conceive, the more relaxed and at ease your body and mind are, the better your fertility is going to be.

The sequence typically follows this order: eyes, jaw, neck, shoulders, arms, back, chest, stomach, pelvis, legs, and feet. PMR was developed by Dr. Edmund Jacobson over sixty years ago. Even though PMR is focused on relieving tension in your body, it's not limited to this. When you're able to relax the muscles in your body, you're also able to relax your mind. Here are the guidelines for a typical PMR exercise:

FOCUS ON YOUR BREATHING. Let your stomach rise as you inhale and then deflate as you exhale. Take a few breaths before you begin the exercise.

FOCUS ON YOUR FOREHEAD. Tighten the muscles in your forehead while counting slowly from one to five. Take a deep, slow breath and release your forehead muscles. Make sure that your stomach rises as you inhale and deflates as you exhale. Repeat and tighten your forehead muscles once again for the count of five. Release again and take a long, deep breath.

Repeat this process for the rest of the PMR exercise. Move all the way down your body, working each area twice.

- Eyes, jaw, and neck.
- Right shoulder, right upper arm, right forearm, right hand.
- Left shoulder, left upper arm, left forearm, and left hand.
- Back, spine, tailbone.
- Chest, stomach, pelvis, buttocks.
- Right upper leg, right lower leg, right foot.
- Left upper leg, left lower leg, left foot.

As you complete the exercise, do a quick mental check over your entire body. If you notice that there are any areas of tension then return to these areas.

You can use PMR at any time during the day when you feel that you need to relax and center yourself. Whenever you start to feel anxious about not being pregnant as quickly as you'd like, take a few minutes to find serenity.

KEEPING A STRESS JOURNAL

Many times the simple act of writing things down can help you clarify your emotions and thoughts so that you can make them less physically and emotionally stressful. Some research shows that a [stress journal](#) can help to reduce the stress that you're going through as you try to conceive. The key is to not only to write about what you're feeling, but also to try and make sense of your emotions so that you can manage them with less anxiety, anger, and frustration.

If you write about a negative life experience, such as infertility, you may find that you're able to work on your own personal strength and spiritual development. Having a strong and healthy mind at this time is only going to enhance your fertility.

Journaling for anxiety and stress relief doesn't mean writing down each thing that happens to you during the day. It means using your journal to write about your emotions and your reactions to what's happening to you in your life. It's a way to record your thoughts and relieve some stress. You may find that writing down your fear of never being a parent helps you sleep better at night. Or perhaps just acknowledging that you're afraid will let you focus on other parts of your life that you've been neglecting.

Many therapists have their patients use a stress journal to let out their emotions. Writing can help to reduce symptoms of depression. It can help you reduce the amount of time that you spend worrying about things that are out of your control. The benefits of a stress journal include the following:

- Helps you sort out and clarify your thoughts and feelings.
- Gives you time to think about your thoughts and feelings so that you can better understand them.
- Gives you an outlet for expressing difficult emotions, such as anger and fear, without harming someone you love.

Let's you release negative thoughts and emotions so that you can move on to a happier frame of mind.

There are no rules when it comes to stress journaling. You can write about anything that you're feeling or thinking. Your daily entries can be as short or as long as you want them to be. No one but you ever needs to read your journal, so don't worry about your writing skills.

Using a stress journal is just another tool that you can use to manage and cope with the stress that you're feeling as you try to conceive. Used in combination with other stress reducing exercises, a journal is a good way to sort out the many emotions of infertility.

MEDITATION FOR STRESS REDUCTION



Many people think that the purpose of meditation is to handle stress and to get away from it all. This is only partly true. The actual aim behind meditation is really to tune in and to get in touch with everything that you're going through. Meditation won't just help reduce your stress; it will also help you find the peace inside of you that you need to help you through this difficult time. Meditation is a way to get into the spaces between your thoughts. You think of something here, then you think of something else, and there's little space between those thoughts.

If you want to use meditation to help you cope with the anxiety and stress of infertility, you need to make it a formal practice. Use some of the following guidelines when you first start with meditation.

YOU NEED TO SET ASIDE TIME EVERY DAY.

- Start with your breath. Breathing is going to slow down your heart rate, focus your mind, and relax all the muscles in your body.
- Stretch before you begin, Stretching will help to loosen your muscles so that you can sit more comfortably.
- Meditate with a purpose. Meditation is an active process and focusing on one point for an extended period of time can be hard for beginners.
- When feelings of frustration start to enter your mind, focus on your breath and let the frustration go.
- Once your mind is quiet begin to take notice of your body. Turn your attention to your feet and then work your way up your body. Include your reproductive organs in this attention.
- Choose to meditate in a room in your home where you don't work, sleep, or exercise.
- Read a couple of [books about meditation](#) so that you have a better understanding of what it's all about.
- Generate moments of awareness throughout your day. Even though you're not doing a formal meditation, you're relaxing your mind and reducing your stress.
- Make sure that you won't be disturbed. You need peaceful conditions to ensure that your inner peace is found.
- Make physical adjustments if you need to. If you need to move your foot a bit to get more comfortable, do so. Taking a second to renew your physical comfort is better than focusing the rest of your meditation on your discomfort.
- Encourage your partner to join you so that you can medi-

tate together.

- Early morning is the ideal time to meditate.
- Be grateful at the end of your practice. Spend 2 or 3 minutes feeling thankful that you were able to focus your mind.

A SIMPLE MEDITATION

The following is a very simple [meditation](#) technique that you can use to reduce some of the stress that you're going through as you try to get pregnant.

SITTING: Sit upright with your spine straight and away a bit from the back of the chair. Put your feet flat on the floor. Place your arms, palms turned upward, right between your thighs and torso.

RELAX YOUR BODY: Doing this “tense and relax” exercise will help your body to relax.

- Inhale sharply through your nose. There should be one short and one long inhalation.
- Tense your entire body until it vibrates with energy.
- Hold your breath, remaining tense, for five seconds.
- Forcibly exhale through your mouth. There should be one short and one long exhalation.
- As you exhale, throw the tension back out.
- Repeat a few times.

BREATHE EVENLY: Inhale slowly while you count to eight. Hold your breath for eight more counts. Exhale slowly to the count of eight. Without a pause, inhale again. Hold. Exhale. This is called a “Measured Breathing Exercise”. Repeat the exercise three to six times. You can vary your count depending on your lung capacity.

CONCENTRATION WITH HONG-SAU: Wait for your own next inhaling natural breath. When it comes, in your head say “Hong” (rhymes with song) as you inhale. This time, don’t hold your breath. Exhale naturally and as you do so, in your head say “Sau” (rhymes with saw). Hong-Sau is an ancient Sanskrit mantra. The meaning is “I am Spirit”. Focus on feeling your breath when you’re silently making the sounds of Hong and Sau.

DON’T CONTROL YOUR BREATH: Just observe your breath as it flows naturally in and out. When you first begin the meditation, you might be aware of the physical process of breathing as your chest and diaphragm expand and contract. As your breathing becomes calmer, try not to focus on the physical. Let your breath flow into your nostrils and then higher into your nasal passages.

SPIRITUAL EYE: With your eyes closed, think of your gaze as being on the point right between your eyebrows. Concentrate on this area. This is the location of spiritual consciousness in your body. It’s also known as the “spiritual eye”. Keep your gaze on this point throughout the meditation. Don’t let your eyes follow the movement of your breath. If your mind starts to wander, bring it back with your mantra and your breath.

END OF MEDITATION: Finish up your meditation practice by inhaling one time through your nose and then exhaling three times through your mouth.

ANXIETY RELAXATION TECHNIQUES



Learning how to use effective anxiety relaxation techniques is important when you're coping with the stress and anxiety of infertility. While these techniques won't cure anxiety on their own, they can help to reduce your anxiety during this stressful time in your life. The less anxiety you experience, the easier it is to cope with what's happening.

There are many different techniques for dealing and coping with anxiety. Many people wonder if anxiety reduction techniques really work and if they should even bother using them. The reality is that relaxation exercises are very helpful to people dealing with infertility, however it will take some commitment on your part to get the most benefit out of them.

You may be wondering if relaxation exercises and meditation exercises are the same thing. Meditation is a type of relaxation technique, but it's certainly not the only exercise

that you can use to manage anxiety. Some relaxation techniques use some of the aspects of meditation, such as using mantras to distract your mind. Other relaxation exercises will have you repeat a positive phrase, or count down backwards. The principle is the same no matter what method you use: to relieve your mind of stress.

MANTRAS: Mantras are sounds that you make during a meditation. You might already know the most common sound, “Om”.

The original reason for mantras was to get you in touch with numerous spiritual deities. Many people have lost the spiritual element of these mantras, but continue to use them anyway along with affirmations, and counting down exercises, to get the following benefits:

DISTRACTING THE MIND. The main benefit of mantras beyond the spiritual element is the mental distraction. Mantras force your mind to focus on something else, in this case the mantra. This helps to lessen the amount of mental energy you can use on the things that are upsetting you, such as your fertility problems.

USE OF SENSORY DISTRACTION. Mantras are also used stimulate your senses. This is an effective way to distract you away from your anxiety. Much the same as mental distraction when you're repeating a mantra, noise is able to stimulate your brain by using hearing, which has a calming effect on your body and mind.

CALMING YOUR BODY AND MIND. The sounds of the mantra themselves can also be calming. When you repeat positive phrases, you'll be listening to something positive in your head instead of something negative. The sound of a mantra is very relaxing.

COMMITTING TO ANXIETY RELAXATION EXERCISES

One reason that more people aren't using relaxation techniques, no matter what anxiety or stress they're going through, is because they haven't seen any results when they've used them in the past. For these techniques to work, you have to prepare yourself and have the right attitude. A big part of dealing with fertility problems is doing what you can to be as emotionally healthy as possible.

You need to commit to overcoming and reducing your anxiety. Most relaxation techniques will take at least a couple of weeks to really master. Don't expect to just start doing them and then expect results right away. At first your focus will be very intense as you try to relax. When you first start doing a relaxation technique, this intense focus might seem to be adding to your stress rather than reducing it. Just keep at it and once you have enough experience it will become easier and you'll start to notice that relaxation is starting to take effect.

Have a positive attitude and keep an open mind. You may think that stress reduction techniques look and feel a little silly at the beginning, particularly if you've never done them before. Keep at it and you'll quickly start to see the positive effects in your life. Make sure that you give yourself about 20 minutes each day to practice relaxation. Wear comfortable clothing and be in a room where you feel safe and contented.

Remember that anxiety relaxation techniques aren't a cure for the anxiety you're feeling, but rather are tools that can help you cope with your infertility. These exercises give you a break from the stress that you're feeling. They're also good to use before you head out to another doctor appointment. You'll feel much calmer and ready to deal with whatever that appointment is going to bring.

VISUALIZATION RELAXATION TECHNIQUE FOR INFERTILITY

Remember that you need to commit to doing this exercise if you want it to work. Don't expect a big change in your anxiety level the first few times that you do it. Do it every day so that it becomes a part of your daily routine.

This visualization relaxation technique is a combination of several different techniques. It takes the best of each, so that it's more effective for your own situation of infertility:

CLOSE YOUR EYES. BEGIN TO BREATHE CALMLY. Keep your eyes closed and breathe in deep and slowly, using your entire diaphragm. Fill your stomach first with a breath and then your chest. Breathe slowly. At the top of your breath, when your lungs are filled with air, hold for a few seconds before exhaling. Breathe in through your nose and then out through your lips, making sure to purse them, much the same as if you were whistling. When you feel you have your breathing under control, you can move on.

SLOWLY COUNT BACKWARDS FROM TEN TO ONE. You can do this in your head, or you can say it out loud. Begin again each time you reach one. It's important that your breath is slow and measured. Counting slowly will help you reach a slower breathing pace. Repeat this sequence until your mind focuses less on your worrying thoughts.

BEGIN THE VISUALIZATION. Mentally take yourself away to somewhere that is very relaxing for you. Keep your eyes closed throughout this whole procedure. Visualize yourself on a sandy beach or sitting beside a waterfall. Using all of your senses, try to imagine this place in as much detail as you can. Focus on the details. What does the waterfall sound like? What does the sand feel like? Immerse yourself in this location. Remember to keep breathing slowly and deeply.

Each time you have a negative thought or emotion that enters your imagination, it's time to wipe it away. Take the negative thought and turn it into an object. For instance, turn

YOUR INFERTILITY INTO A ROCK. Then imagine something relaxing, such as a graceful bird, picking up the rock and taking it away. Then continue imagining the peaceful and relaxing world all around you.

BEGIN using positive affirmations now what you're in your peaceful place and have gotten rid of negative thoughts. At first these affirmations will seem awkward. Keep at it and it will start to feel more natural. The goal with this visualization is to make sure that you're focusing on positive things. This will distract your mind from the negative thoughts and emotions of infertility, and provide you with happy and positive ones instead.

Continue this visualization process until you're no longer focusing on negative thoughts. Try to do it as long as you can. Any time a negative thought or emotion enters your mind make sure you turn it into an object and have it taken away so that you can keep yourself in that relaxing and peaceful place.

Here are some examples of positive affirmations that you can use:

- I feel calm and serene.
- I love my body.
- I believe in myself.
- I am in control of my life.
- I have a wonderful life.
- I am on a wonderful journey to have a baby.

Remember that you might not see immediate results from this visual relaxation exercise. Start doing it with an open mind without expecting too much. It may take a few weeks of practice for this process to start to feel natural.

SLEEP TO EASE STRESS



One of the most troublesome side effects of stress and anxiety is having difficulty sleeping. When you're trying to conceive, getting enough sleep is imperative to your overall health. You may be having trouble falling asleep or perhaps you fall asleep just fine but wake up repeated through the night. As your sleep becomes less restful, your stress and anxiety are going to intensify. This is going to improve your fertility by allowing your body to be more relaxed and less tense. There are a number of things that you can do improve your quality of sleep.

Adjusting your sleep patterns may take some time, depending on how long they've been out of order. It will take your body and mind a bit of time to unlearn these unhealthy sleep patterns. When you're going through the stress and heart-break of not being able to conceive, there's a lot turmoil going through your mind. When your body should be resting and sleeping, you may instead find yourself tossing and turning

as negative thoughts and fears run through your head.

Work on developing regular sleep times. Try to arrange your life so that you're in bed and then awake at about the same time every day. This may mean that you need to go to bed earlier than you have been or that you need to force yourself to get up even if you're still feeling tired.

Avoid taking naps during the day. Taking a nap may make you feel good and you might think that it's allowing you to catch up on sleep, but it's not. All it's really doing is throwing off your circadian rhythm. You need to retrain your brain so that you fall asleep and wake up at consistent times. When you're trying to conceive you need to make sure your body is getting sufficient rest. It's okay to lie down to rest without actually falling asleep. Try reading a book or listening to some music while you rest for a while.

Use your bed only for sleeping and for sex. Sleep problems are often exacerbated when your body and mind are stimulated right before you go to bed. Don't watch television in bed, read, or make phone calls. If you do this then your bed becomes a place where your mind is active instead of being a place where you feel calm and relaxed.

Avoid anxiety in the hour before bedtime. This means avoiding any stimulating tasks, such as exercise or work. This is a good time to practice some relaxation techniques so that you can calm your mind and prepare your body for sleep. When having fertility problems it's far too easy to get caught up in stress and anxiety. Studies show that stress decreases your fertility and makes it even harder for you to get pregnant. This is why proper sleep habits are so important.

Deal with stress before you get into bed. Many sleep problems are due to too much mental activity. You need to do what you can during the day to reduce your stress and anxiety so that you don't lie awake in bed worrying. It can be hard not to stop thinking about your desire to have a baby, however there's nothing that you can do about it in the middle of the night. You need to focus instead on get-

ting the sleep that your body and mind need to stay healthy. Try writing out your worries an hour before you go to bed. Yes, your concerns about not conceiving are real and legitimate. However, you're already doing what you can to work through your fertility problems. Stressing over them at night is not going to help.

Acknowledge and let go of your feelings. Many times sleep problems are due to harboring the feelings and emotions that are bothering you. Many of the techniques and exercises found in this report will help you deal with your feelings and thoughts about infertility. Write out your feelings and give voice to them so that they're not flying around in your mind when you're trying to sleep. Write about your anxiety about not getting pregnant. Write about your fears that you may never be a parent. Have some compassion for yourself and validate your right to have these thoughts and feelings. Recognize that it's okay to feel some anxiety about what you're going through right now.

Get up out of bed for a few minutes if you're not sleeping. If you've been lying awake for more than 15 minutes, then get up and go into another room. Write down your negative thoughts and feelings, and then go back to bed. Sometimes just getting up and dealing with your fears will help you let go of them long enough so that you can get some sleep.

It can't be stressed enough the importance of getting enough sleep when you're trying to conceive. Sleep is important for both women and men when it comes to fertility. Sleep disruptions will only keep the cycle of stress and infertility going in full motion.

EXERCISE TO REDUCE STRESS



As we become more health-conscious, there's more focus than ever on the importance of exercise. Some people exercise to control their weight while others exercise to become healthier. When you're going through the emotions of infertility, exercise and stress management are also closely connected. Exercise can be an enormously effective stress reliever.

Exercise can be used as an outlet for the frustration and anger that you're feeling when you're not able to conceive. The stress of not getting pregnant can start to build up and you might be feeling angry and annoyed over the smallest things. This anger can start to affect all areas of your life. High-energy forms of exercise can help you release some of these negative emotions that you're holding inside. These unhealthy emotions can be holding you back from reaching your optimum fertility. When you exercise, some stress hormones can be decreased in your body. This includes the

stress hormone cortisol. Exercise increases the endorphins in your body. These endorphins are the ‘feel-good’ chemicals since they give your mood a natural boost. People who are runners will experience the high that comes from raised endorphins. You don’t need to start running to start to feel better. All you need to do is start adding some form of exercise to your daily routine.

Physical activity on its own can help to take your mind off of your infertility. You can focus on the exercise that you’re doing, or you can let yourself go into a Zen-like state. Exercise will give you a change of scenery as well, taking you out of your comfort zone. Many people dealing with infertility will start to isolate and stay home. Going to a gym or a yoga class, or biking on a trail, will allow you to realize that there is more to life than your infertility.

By now you know that anxiety and stress can negatively impact your fertility. Not only can stress lead to illness, this illness can also cause stress. This is a cycle that you might be going through with your infertility. Not getting pregnant as quickly as you’d like is causing you stress and then this stress is inhibiting your chances of getting pregnant each month. Improving your overall health with exercise is crucial to your fertility.

JUST GET MOVING

If you haven’t been doing any type of exercise, you might be wondering just where to start. The first place to start is with commitment. You need to consciously make time in your daily schedule to exercise. Any type of exercise will do... anything from [yoga](#) to aerobics to swimming. What’s important is that you start moving so that your body and mind can start to see the benefits of exercise on your anxiety and stress. You don’t need to be an athlete to make changes. Even if you’re out of shape, just doing a bit more each day is going to reduce your stress significantly.

Think of exercise as “meditation in motion”. After swimming

a few laps in the pool, you'll often find that you've forgotten your infertility problems for just a while. Your mind will be focused on the movement of your body, rather than focused internally on all those thoughts and emotions that are getting you down. When you focus on a physical activity, you'll start to feel more optimistic and calm. Consider exercise to be a critical part of your stress reduction program.

Here are some of the best exercises for reducing anxiety and stress:

KARATE: Karate helps you to release tension and frustration. It also helps to develop self-discipline. You'll have to work out with others, which makes Karate a good form of exercise for you to "get out of yourself".

SWIMMING: Swimming is a very calming and peaceful type of exercise. Your mind will become totally focused on your body as you move through the water. It's also a great way to improve your overall health.

WALKING: There are no excuses for this one; just about everyone can take a walk and fit it into their day. You can walk during your lunch break or in the evening, after you've had dinner. Encourage your partner to walk with you. Walking will put your mind into a meditative state, allowing you to forget about infertility for just a while.

COPING BY LETTING GO



Coping means dealing with problems and learning to overcome them. When you're having trouble getting, there are many things that you need to overcome and cope with, such as stress and anxiety. In fact, problems of one kind or another seem to come at you all the time and your main goal in coping is to learn how to make it from one day to the next without falling apart.

When it comes to “coping” with infertility, and how you deal with the challenges in effective ways, it's important to deal with both the mental and physical disruptions caused by what's happening to you.

Coping can be divided into two main categories: solving the problem and letting go. When you cope by problem solving, you go into action. No doubt you're already doing this as you do what you can to try to get pregnant. Your goal in problem solving is to change something, in your case your infertility

problems. For instance, perhaps you're working with a [Traditional Chinese Medicine](#) (TCM) practitioner to find natural ways to conceive. Or perhaps you've just switched from using an ob-gyn to seeing a reproductive endocrinologist to get a new perspective on why you're not getting pregnant. Problem-solving coping is necessary with infertility and has value.

THEN THERE IS COPING BY LETTING GO. Letting go doesn't mean that you're giving up on your desire to have a baby. What it does mean is that you're finding ways to clear your mind and emotions of the turbulence, worry, and stress that you seem to be dealing with everyday. It's about letting yourself be calm and still so that you can enter a meditative and mind-clearing state. Learning how to let go and just be allows your over-taxed emotional and physical system to take a little break. When you let go your breathing, blood pressure, and heart rate will all slow down. Your body will be functioning much more fully. You'll in fact be enhancing your fertility in a natural way.

THEN THERE IS YOUR MIND. Most people find it much more difficult to let go of negative emotional feelings than physical tension. It's typical to believe that unless you can sit perfectly still for long periods of time, that you're just not accomplishing anything. Yes it true that the letting go techniques of mindfulness, meditation, hypnosis, and visualization become more developed with practice. However, even the simple act of sitting still and taking a few deep breaths can help you relax and let go for just a bit. The reprieve from stress and anxiety might be short-lived, but with the commitment to yourself to let go whenever you need it, you'll soon feel the benefits. Let yourself sit back and not focus so much on what's happening with your fertility.

Coping by letting go can make a big difference when you're going through fertility issues. Going into action can release the normal stress and anxiety that goes with the infertility battle. However, coping by letting go can relax your body and mind in ways that will help your fertility in positive ways. As well as the benefits for your mind, there are a few

other benefits when you allow yourself to relax enough to center yourself and focus your mind inward. In these quiet moments you open up to your own ideas, certainties, and inner feelings that get pushed out of the way when you're always focused on having a baby. Inner stillness and inner reflection are good ways to deal with your confusion and worry when you're not getting pregnant. You can free yourself from mental chaos that is only causing negative emotions to take hold.

Here's a simple technique that will you to work on letting go:

CLOSE YOUR EYES. Take a deep breath and then release your breath slowly. And as you relax in the rhythm of your breath, believe that you have moved from the “before” to the “now” moment. Moisten any one of your fingers with saliva and touch this finger to the center of your forehead. Now, just start to notice with each breath that you take, the difference in temperature between that wet spot on your forehead and the dry area around it. Stay in this position as long as you want. Don't rush through this exercise. Let yourself enjoy the gentle breathing as you realize that you're doing what you can to have a baby and that everything is going to be just fine.

USING YOGA TO COMBAT STRESS



To begin changing the way you react to stress, you need to understand how it usually affects your body. If your mind interprets a stressful event, such as infertility, as a threat, it immediately triggers a response in your autonomic nervous system. Your stress response will kick in and stimulate the sympathetic nervous system (SNS). Your body will then be flooded with hormones, such as norepinephrine and cortisol. These hormones will intensify senses in your body. Your blood pressure and heart rate will increase.

THE CHEMISTRY BEHIND STRESS

The parasympathetic nervous system (PNS) in your body, which manages your physical relaxation and your emotional calm, will now become overcome by this sympathetic response. With your sympathetic nervous system in control, and the parasympathetic overwhelmed, your body is cued

up to respond not only with energy and focus, but also with fear, anger, and anxiety. All of these will negatively impact your fertility at a time when your body needs to be as healthy as possible.

We're all developed with this primal reaction, which is also known as "fight-or-flight", so that we can either fight or flee from what we perceive to be danger. Whether you consciously think of it or not, you perceive your fertility problems as being a danger to you and the baby that you want so much to have.

While it's easy to think of infertility as a threat to your life expectations, it's better for your mental and physical health to temper that perception. Think of infertility not as a stress factor, but rather as a challenge that both you and your partner can handle. Over time, chronic stress will take a big toll on your body and mind, leading to all types of other health problems in addition to your fertility problems, such as insomnia, depression, chronic pain, and heart disease.

There are alternatives to the fight-or-flight stress response. The techniques in this report, such as [yoga](#), will help you find ways to challenge your stress. The challenge response lets you meet the stress of infertility by giving you the skills to see your fertility problems clearly. You can learn how to respond to the anxiety and stress in your life at this time without becoming completely overwhelmed.

[Practicing yoga](#) is one way that, when you start to feel completely overwhelmed with stress and anxiety, your nervous system will react differently. Think of your autonomic nervous system like a water tap. Your sympathetic nervous system is represented by the hot water and your parasympathetic system by the cold. When your body goes into fight-or-flight mode, it's as though the hot water has been turned up and the cold water has been turned down to a tiny dribble.

When you learn how to develop a challenge response, the hot water will continue to flow as it normally should and the

cold water is turned down a little bit. You now have enough heat in your body to face the stress of infertility, but you haven't yet gotten rid of the cooling effect. When you totally meet the challenge of stress, your parasympathetic nervous system will become normalized, and your body and mind will be back in balance. Yoga can help you with this.

Yoga allows your autonomic nervous system to respond to stress. The practice of yoga uses a heart-rate variability to reduce your stress levels.

When doing yoga, every inhalation helps your nervous system to shift towards a sympathetic state and your heart beats a bit faster. When you exhale, your heart beats more slowly and your nervous system shifts toward a parasympathetic state. Along with doing yoga, you need to perceive the way you view the stress of infertility. The other relaxation techniques in this report will help you learn how to cope with your fertility problems so that your physical and mental health are improved during this time when you're trying to conceive.

YOGA POSES FOR STRESS

To break the cycle of stress, it helps to train and focus your thoughts and body reactions to slow down. Practicing a style of yoga known as restorative yoga will help to reduce the stress of infertility. Restorative yoga will not only help to alleviate the stress and fatigue you're feeling as you try to get pregnant, it will also help boost your fertility in a natural way. The following poses are intended to be performed as a sequence. Each pose will help to relieve stress and the tense areas of your body. The poses will also help to stimulate your immune and lymphatic systems.

Stay in each [pose](#) for about one to two minutes. Focus on breathing deeply. Always end your yoga practice in Savasana, which is the classic yogic pose of deep relaxation where you're lying down but are still awake. Take the time to notice the calm and rest that overcomes you as you move through

your practice. Doing yoga a few times a week when you're trying to get pregnant will help to reduce your stress levels and improve your overall health and mental well-being.

CAT POSE (MARJARYASANA)

This pose will stretch out your neck and back torso. It will give your body a gentle massage to the belly organs and spine.

Begin on your hands and knees in a “tabletop” position. Your knees should be placed directly below your hips. Your wrists, elbows and shoulders should be in line and perpendicular to the floor. Make sure that your head is centered in a neutral position, with your eyes looking at the floor. As you exhale, round your spine upwards to the ceiling, making certain to keep your knees and shoulders in position. Let your head release to the floor, moving your chin to your chest. Inhale and come back to a neutral “tabletop” position on your knees and hands. Repeat the motions, along with exhaling and inhaling for about one minute.



Cobra Pose (Bhujangasana)

This pose helps to relieve fatigue and stress. It also helps to stimulate your abdominal organs and open up your lungs and heart.

Lie prone on the floor. Stretch back your legs and let the tops of your feet rest on the floor. Spread out your hands flat on the floor, right beneath your shoulders. Pull your elbows back into your body. Press the tops of your thighs, feet, and your pubis firmly into the floor. Exhale and start to straighten your arms to raise your chest off the floor. Only go to the height at which you can hold a connection through your pubis down to your legs. Press your tailbone up toward your pubis, lifting your pubis towards the navel. Narrow your hip points. Then firm up your buttocks. Firm your shoulder blades against your back, pushing out your side ribs a bit forward. Hold this pose anywhere from 15 to 30 seconds, making sure that your breathing is slow and easy. Release back to the floor as you exhale.



Extended Triangle Pose (Utthita Trikonasana)

This pose helps to relieve stress. It also helps to stimulate your abdominal organs and improve your digestion.

To do triangle pose, stand with your feet about 3 feet apart. Turn your left foot out. Extend your arms out to the sides. Lean to your left and then lower your left hand down to your shin while raising your right arm up toward ceiling. Repeat on the opposite side.

If this pose is a bit too hard for you, you can relax it a bit by using a chair. Place your left hand on the chair for support while raising your right hand up toward the ceiling.

CHAIR POSE (UTKATASANA)

This yoga pose stretches your chest and shoulders. It also stimulates your heart, diaphragm, and abdominal organs.

For the chair pose, stand with your feet together. Then lean and sit back, bending your knees deeply. Make sure to lean forward a bit, keeping your back flat. Keep your arms extended overhead with your palms facing in.



Chair Pose (Utkatasana)

BOAT POSE

This pose will help to relax you and relieve stress. It will help to you to learn to balance. Balancing is a good way to focus your breathing and reduce any anxiety that you're feeling.

While sitting with your legs extended out in front of you on floor, lean your entire torso backwards. Lift up your legs so that your shins are parallel to floor. Your torso and thighs will form a V. Keep your knees bent. Reach out your arms alongside your calves. Remain in this pose for about one minute.

CHILD'S POSE (BALASANA)

This pose calms your brain and helps to relieve fatigue and stress. It also gently stretches your hips, thighs, and ankles.

Kneel on the floor. Put your big toes together and sit back on your heels. Separate your knees so that they are about as wide as your hips. Exhale and lower your torso down in between your thighs. Place your hands down on the floor in front your torso with the palms down. Release your shoulders and let them lean towards the floor. This is a resting pose. Stay in this pose from 30 seconds to a few minutes, if comfortable.



Child's Pose (Balasana)

CORPSE POSE (SAVASANA)

The Corpse pose calms your brain and helps to relieve mild depression and stress. It completely relaxes your body. It's ideal for relieving fatigue, headache, and insomnia.

The Corpse pose calms your brain and helps to relieve mild depression and stress. It completely relaxes your body. It's ideal for relieving fatigue, headache, and insomnia.

In Savasana, it's essential that your body be in a neutral position. Lie flat on your back with arms resting comfortably along the sides of your body with the palms upward. Extend your legs out in front of you and slightly turned outward. Make sure that you're completely comfortable. Shift your body if you need to. Close your eyes. Gently guide your eyes to the place between your eyebrows, the Sun Center. Relax your entire brow. Be aware of your natural breath. Remain in this pose for 2 to 15 minutes.



Corpse Pose (Savasana)

HERBS TO REDUCE STRESS



From a naturopathic viewpoint, the long-term approach to deal with stress and anxiety is to work on your sleep patterns, eat healthy natural foods, exercise, and work on your inner self. The following herbal teas are used by both naturopaths and TCM practitioners to reduce stress and allow you to heal from the depletion that occurs in your body when you're undergoing the stress of infertility. All of these herbs are safe to use, however be sure to discuss with your doctor or healing practitioner if you're already taking other herbal remedies, to ensure there won't be a negative reaction.

[Teas](#) have been used for thousands of years in many cultures to help with relaxation and as a healing medicine. In most cases of stress and anxiety today, Western medicine will turn to prescription medications to help you cope. There are natural alternatives. These alternatives are ideal when you're trying to conceive as naturally as possible. You're trying to get your body and mind as healthy as possible to give your-

self the best chances of getting pregnant. This means that you want to avoid the use of Western medication whenever possible.

HERBAL TEAS

PASSIONFLOWER (PASSIFLORA INCARNATA):

Native Americans in the Southern United States first used Passionflower. Passionflower contains a flavone known as “chrysin”, which is great when used for anti-anxiety. It works much the same way the pharmaceutical drug Xanax works. Passionflower is considered to be very safe and doesn’t interact adversely with any drugs or other herbal remedies that you might be taking.

TCM practitioners often recommend Passionflower for people who have a lot on their mind. When you’re dealing with infertility, your thoughts will often obsess around wanting so much to have a baby. Passionflower can help to still your mind.

You can make Passionflower tea by infusing 1 tablespoon of the dried herbs into 1 cup of boiling water. Let it steep for about 10 minutes. Drink the tea close to bedtime to encourage restful sleep. More commonly, you can use two droppers-full (about 50 drops) of the herbal tincture in warm water before going to bed. If you’re feeling a lot of stress you can take 25 drops of the tincture whenever you feel the need.

ASHWAGANDHA:

Ashwaganda is an herbal medicine that is grown in India, Africa, and the Mediterranean. This herb helps your body fight stress and anxiety by decreasing the production of stress hormones that cause the fight-or-flight response. This quality in an herb is called “adaptogen”, a quality that can help your body to relax and keep it strong. Ashwaganda

is also considered to be potent antioxidant. Ashwaganda has a chemical called “ashwagandholine alkaloid”. This natural chemical has a mild tranquilizer and relaxant effect on your central nervous system. Ashwaganda is often recommended for people who are exhausted and nervous after having undergone a lot of emotional and physical stress, such as problems conceiving. It’s also ideal at bedtime for those people who are suffering from insomnia. It’s also used as an immune stimulant in people who have low white blood cell counts.

- Ashwaganda is considered to be quite safe when used short term. Long term use has not yet been fully researched. This means that it’s okay for you to use as you deal with the stress of infertility.
- Take ashwaganda about 30 minutes before you go to bed. Combine about 1 cup of boiling milk (soy, almond, cow, rice, or oat milk) with a half-teaspoon of the dried leaves or with the powdered herb. Let this steep for about 10 to 15 minutes and then let it cool. Strain the mixture and then drink.

ELEUTHEROCOCCUS (SIBERIAN GINSENG):

Eleutherococcus is grown in Siberia, Japan, Korea, and China. Also known as “eleuthero”, this herb is not thought to be a true ginseng, such as Panax ginseng, because it doesn’t belong to the same genus family of plants. Eleuthero tea has “triterpenoid saponins”, which are elements that have a helpful effect on your body when it is stressed and anxious. Siberian ginseng tea can help to improve your blood circulation. It also helps to boost your mental and physical abilities. It also helps to regulate the amount of stress that you experience.

People who benefit the most from Siberian ginseng are those who are undergoing a lot of stress.

Eleutherococcus is best taken the morning or the afternoon. For the best results take the herb for 6 to 8 weeks. Then stop using it for 2 weeks before restarting.

Eleutherococcus can be taken as a tea. It also comes in stronger forms, such as tinctures and capsules.

HAWTHORNE (CRATAGEUS):

Hawthorne originated in England and Europe. It has a nourishing and calming effect on your cardiovascular system. It also has a gentle relaxing effect on your vascular system if you have high blood pressure due to too many stress hormones. Hawthorne has healthy plant chemicals called “flavonoids”. Flavonoids help to keep your blood vessels strong. Hawthorne can also help to balance cholesterol, bad cholesterol, and triglycerides.

- It's recommended that you take doses of Hawthorne throughout your day. Hawthorne is safe to take for extended periods of time. It's often prescribed by TCM practitioners for people who are under a lot of stress.
- Hawthorne can be taken as a tea by itself, or it can be used in combination with other calming herbs, such as chamomile. Stronger versions of this Hawthorne can be taken, such as a liquid tincture or as an extract.

HERBAL REMEDIES

Everybody experiences stress and anxiety at some time in their life. When you're trying to get pregnant, you're most likely going through a lot of different emotions. Stress, anxiety, and fear are felt by most women and men who are going through infertility issues. These different expressions of anxiety can greatly interfere not only with your ability to

live a normal life, but can also interfere with your fertility itself. The following herbal remedies are a safe and healthy approach to helping you deal with anxiety and stress.

KAVA ROOT:

Kava root comes from the South Pacific. It's commonly used to treat mild to moderate anxiety. Kava performs much the same as the benzodiazepine class of drugs, which include Valium and Xanax. However, Kava root doesn't have the negative effects that these drugs have. Kava is best taken as a concentrated extract, either in tablet or capsule form. Liquid extracts, which work very quickly, are also available if you don't mind the challenging flavor that Kava has.

LEMON BALM:

For thousands of years, lemon balm has been used to relieve stress and anxiety, to promote sleep, and to raise your mood. Lemon balm is best taken as a relaxing tea. After a cup of tea you'll notice that you're feeling more tranquil. Lemon balm can also be used in combination with other herbs such as chamomile, hops, and valerian.

CONCLUSION



It's important that you don't let infertility and stress rule your life. The connection between infertility and stress is a strong one.

Your reproductive system starts inside the hypothalamus, which is a small cone shaped structure within your brain. The hypothalamus is in charge of regulating all of the functions in your body. The pituitary gland is connected right below the hypothalamus, and together they manage many parts of the endocrine system, such as the hormones and glands. The pituitary gland also stimulates your autonomic nervous system.

A gland is a cluster of cells that produce and release chemicals within your body, called hormones. These hormones are the chemical go-betweens that transmit information and commands from one set of cells to the next. Each different

hormone is only connected to the cells that are genetically conditioned to receive and respond to those signals.

When your stress becomes chronic, the signals in your brain will get confused. This will send mixed messages to the pituitary gland, which is responsible for releasing certain hormones that you need for your sexual organs to function normally. When not working normally, the end result is hormonal disturbances. These hormone imbalances will negatively impact your fertility.

Stress can temporarily shut down some of the non-essential functions in your body, such as conception, ovulation, and the production of sperm. This is how stress and infertility are so interrelated and why it's imperative that both you and your partner find healthy and natural ways to cope with this stress.

Remember that you are not your infertility. As you try to conceive, focus on the good and wonderful things that you already have in your life. Many couples have gone on to conceive after first dealing with the stress and anxiety that they're going through. The strategies and techniques outlined in this report will help you find what works best for you when it comes to managing stress.