

## Natural fertility methods (NFM) are the way forward to resolving infertility problems for many couples

Research by the University of Surrey (completed in 1995) on The Foresight Association natural fertility methods followed the progress of 387 couples. 59% of these couples had some previous adverse reproductive history including miscarriage (38%) and established infertility (37%). Out of these couples 89% gave birth to a healthy baby including 81% of those who were previously 'infertile'. IVF offers a 35% success rate.

It is worth noting that in a normal population sample of the same size we would see approximately 70 miscarriages and 12 malformations. In the study group who used the preconception health care methods involved in NFM there were no miscarriages and all the babies were healthy.

## Who would benefit from preconception health care?

- Normal, healthy fertile couples who want to produce the healthiest baby possible
- Couples who have general infertility with or without known cause
- Couples with single or recurrent miscarriages
- Couples with a previous history of malformation, premature birth, low birth weight, stillbirth or sudden infant death syndrome
- Couples seeking preconception advice for IVF, GIFT and IUI
- Older couples, including women over 40 years

## What is preconception health care?

As parents-to-be, it is vital to maximise your health to improve quality of both sperm and egg. This will reduce and in most cases eliminate infertility, recurrent miscarriages, premature births, low birth weight and birth defects. You also increase your chances of conceiving a healthier baby, having a better pregnancy and in time, an enhanced birth and bonding experience.

## Why is it so relevant now?

At present in Australia:

- One couple in six is infertile
- One woman in five will suffer a miscarriage
- One baby in ten is born prematurely
- One baby in thirty is born with a congenital defect
- One child in every ten suffers from learning &/or behavioural problems
- One child in five suffers from asthma

Many eminent researchers have shown that conditions such as infertility, miscarriage, low birth weight, congenital defects, breast feeding difficulties, learning difficulties, allergies and many more are often preventable with preconception health care.

## What is involved in preconception care?

Improvement of nutrition is the cornerstone of preconception health care. Every aspect of reproductive health is dependent on an adequate supply of vitamins, minerals, amino acids and fatty acids. The programme, while improving nutritional status, also involves detoxification and general improvement of all systems of the body.

## What happens next?

Once the detoxification has been completed and any additional health concerns addressed, couples are given the "green light" and can go ahead and conceive. At this point you will be provided with clear instructions regarding timing to ensure that your conception occurs at an optimal time in your cycle.

## Pregnancy

Support continues throughout your pregnancy to ensure that all the advantages obtained during the preconception program are maintained. Typically this involves a consultation every 4 weeks to monitor and maintain optimal nutritional status for both mother and child, avoid miscarriage and answer any questions.

## Post Partum health for mother and child

At this stage it is our job to advise on correct diet for breast feeding as well as infant health issues such as diet, digestion and immunity. After the first three months we then see you and your baby twice a year for a check up.