

THE Fertile Kitchen™ COOKBOOK

Simple Recipes for Optimizing Your Fertility



By Cindy Bailey and Pierre Giauque, Ph.D.
with a Foreword by Philip E. Chenette, M.D.

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Fertile  Kitchen™
COOKBOOK

Simple Recipes for Optimizing Your Fertility

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"Food can be a most effective agent of change. For parents-to-be it's another pair of shears to clear the baby trail. Armed with the energizing, tasty treats of The Fertile Kitchen™ Cookbook, you might hike up that trail with more ease and an extra bounce in your step."

– Julia Indichova, author of *The Fertile Female and Inconceivable*,
founder of www.fertileheart.com

"When trying to conceive, changing my diet was one of the most effective fertility treatments I found. Figuring out a strict fertility diet was tough going on my own. This cookbook gives great, straightforward guidance on making a healthy fertility diet part of your life. My husband and I have tried some of the recipes, and not only do they taste great, but even my non-chef husband can easily follow the step-by-step pictures and instructions."

– Alison Armstrong, Designer and Mom to 4-year-old daughter

"If I was trying to stick to a specific plan for diet/health/fertility concerns, I would definitely buy this book. ...The dishes we made [from this cookbook] were easy, yummy, and required only a quick clean up. I also liked that most of the "extra" ingredients we needed (garlic, oil, salt, pepper, dill and so on) were "normal" items we had already stocked in our kitchen."

– Karen Kelly, Co-founder and CEO of a market research company

"I just finished testing a handful of recipes. I was surprised how flavorful they were considering the minimal amount of seasonings used—and all were so easy to make. I would buy this book just for the healthful recipe selections alone."

– Vené Franco, Freelance Food Writer and Editor

"I must say that in addition to the recipes tasting great, Pierre Giauque's sense of seasoning is right on! I usually have to adjust the salt and pepper in most recipes, but the amounts in the recipes I tried enhanced without overpowering the other flavors."

– Louisa Verma, Researcher

Foreword

The biological imperative to reproduce can feel so strong, emotional and urgent that men and women feel a sense of overwhelming frustration, sadness and depression when it doesn't happen. About 7.3 million couples in the U.S. alone experience some kind of challenge when it comes to conception and pregnancy. What should come naturally to one couple may turn into a medical event for another. The pain, sadness and frustration a couple experiences can even wreak enough havoc on a once strong relationship to cause its dissolution.

For all those that find conception so easy, the goal remains elusive for so many others. Barriers to conception can emerge from age, illness or genetic pre-disposition—and in some cases, barriers remain unknown. Conception can only occur once a month, and when conception fails, frustration and disappointment mount. Over time, these issues can become a stressful fertility problem.

For conception to occur, the environment must be just right. Each conception is a one in a trillion event. One egg of the millions that are present at birth, one sperm of the 100 million at each ejaculate, combine to produce an embryo. The odds against any one sperm or egg are astronomical. If fertilization is achieved—a difficult event in and of itself—the even more challenging processes of cell division and finding a healthy spot in the uterus to implant begin. Conditions must be precise for the embryo to develop.

It is rather stunning that reproduction happens as easily as it does so often. Reproduction is a highly complex process that is the result of millions of years of evolution, highly tuned genetic and physiologic processes, and a great deal of luck. The basics of reproduction—ovulation, ejaculation, delivery of the gametes to the female reproductive tract, fertilization, implantation, and early growth of the embryo—are well understood, but the process of reproduction is far more complex than these relatively simple technical details.

At fertilization, the embryo provides a recipe for its development. The genetic code recorded on the 23 pairs of chromosomes offers many possible pathways to create a child. For the individual cell, there are codes for making proteins, codes for the machinery that produces the proteins, and codes for the energy apparatus that supports the production of those proteins. There are codes for integrating the cells into the body—combining cells to create tissues

and organs, codes for the senses, detection of light, heat, taste and smell, codes for the heart and plumbing, and codes for the brain and nervous system to run the whole apparatus. An amazingly complex recipe, but nothing more than an instruction set—and far from the finished product.

Producing a baby from this recipe is a different matter altogether. It has become quite clear that there are many ways of interpreting the recipe supplied by the embryo. A particular protein code may have a dozen different pathways of production. Pathway A may produce a healthy active protein, while pathways B, C and D may produce an abnormal protein with little functional utility.

Which pathway is chosen is the result of a complex interplay of the recipe with the *environment*. The surrounding fluids, energy, proteins, amino acids, vitamins, carbohydrates and fats that are available to the embryo determine the execution of the recipe. If some nutrient is in short supply, Pathway B may be taken over by Pathway A, resulting in loss of an essential protein. Interpretation of the recipe is highly dependent on the environment in which this happens, which in turn is dependent on diet.

Maintaining the correct conditions in that environment is the goal of nutrition. Reproduction will only occur when plentiful raw materials co-exist. Adequate levels of protein, carbohydrates and fats, and the raw materials of vitamins, minerals and energy sources are required for production of the gametes, preparation of the uterus, and maintenance of the early pregnancy.

Nutrition also plays a role in conception. In adults, low-fat diets increase the risk of ovulation disorders. Vitamin supplements reduce the risk. Sperm production is enhanced by nutritional supplements and decreased by nutritional insults like alcohol and poor diet.

Changes in maternal nutrition directly affect the risk of birth defects. Neural tube defects, such as spina bifida and anencephaly, are related to insufficient folic acid levels in the diet. Essential oils such as DHA and omega-3 are important for brain and eye development. Maternal diet is also known to affect future childhood performance in school.

Our science is only beginning to unravel these mysteries, but there is no doubt that every human is a product of a unique recipe in the form of DNA from the sperm and egg in combination with nutritional building blocks needed to interpret that recipe. A good recipe, with adequate building blocks, is essential to the outcome of a healthy child.

Where do these building blocks come from? The food we eat. Breakfast, lunch and dinner, the carbohydrates, oils and proteins that comprise our diets are processed into basic components of amino acids, sugars and fats that make up our cells. That's why nutrition in pre-conception is so important to embryonic development.

We know that altering the ratio of energy sources available in the first days of embryo development may dramatically influence early growth to the blastocyst stage, the stage at which the embryo is ready to attach to the uterine wall. Missing raw materials, such as amino acids and essential oils, may result in failure of the placenta and errors in brain and eye formation. Diet also appears to have some influence on gender development too.

Improving diet is essential to achieving the goal of a healthy child. Good genes, a healthy reproductive apparatus, and all the raw materials that nutrition provides must be in place. I am so pleased to see this renewed emphasis on diet and fertility, and look forward to using *The Fertile Kitchen*TM in my own practice.

Philip E. Chenette, M.D.
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Introduction

Cindy writes:

At age 40, after trying to get pregnant with my husband for over a year, I visited a popular reproductive endocrinologist (a fertility doctor) in Northern California who gave me the hard news: that I had a two percent chance of conceiving on my own.

In that moment, my heart turned to lead and dropped to the floor. I had already heard the hysteria about how difficult it can be to get pregnant in one's forties, and I knew my follicle stimulating hormone (FSH) had started to rise—indicating that my stash of eggs was losing quality and/or quantity, but two percent? That number alone put me into panic. It said to me, “Forget it, it's impossible, you will never be a mother.” I wanted to scream!

In my frustration, panic and deep sadness, I was not alone. A Harvard study revealed that women who want a child and are told they can't have one react with the same level of depression and stress as those who are told they have cancer or AIDS. The sense of loss is profound.

In the doctor's office that day, however, I also had another reaction. I simply, flat out refused to accept the doctor's grim prognosis. “Where do these statistics come from anyway?” I wondered. “Who are these other people lumped into the two percent with me?” I decided right then and there I was not a statistic. I was an individual, and I could make a difference in my own fertility. I had already begun researching natural, holistic methods of aiding fertility, and I knew in my gut this was true.

I had another motivation for this attitude: It was simply and utterly *unacceptable* to me that I don't get to have a child. I refused to believe that. My mind wouldn't even let the idea in. I had a strong sense that my future child was out there, waiting for me to be ready, and I was not about to let him or her down by giving up. I made a commitment to do everything in my power to meet this child.

Of course, the odds were against me, but that was no excuse not to challenge them. I had nothing to lose and everything to gain. Creating a baby was the most important ambition in my life. Instead of statistics—which I completely blocked from my mind—I chose to believe in *possibility*. Possibility is

an open invitation, there to explore if we choose, and I for one did not want to have any regrets for not exploring this possibility to the fullest.

A month before walking into the doctor's office that day, I had already begun to make changes. Bolstered by research, I put myself on a strict fertility friendly diet, among other natural healing regimens, such as yoga, visualizations, meditation and supplements.

Four months later, to the astonishment of my doctor and to my own breathless amazement, I got pregnant naturally and later delivered a healthy baby (our son, Julien).

That experience taught me a lot about trusting my instincts and my body, believing in myself in spite of the odds, and accepting that I had the power to make a difference.

We all have that power—much more of it than we think, or allow ourselves to believe.

It's true that in the end, it's not only up to us. Conception holds an element of wondrous mystery, and over that mystery we have little control. We can meet it halfway, though, because we do have control over our bodies, minds and emotions—even if it doesn't feel like it sometimes—and we can bring them all into focus with the goal of having a baby. We only have to choose to do it.

Changing my diet to aid conception was actually the second time I had used food as part of a regimen to resolve an "impossible" condition. Years before, I used nutritional healing to cure me of a mysterious illness I had for several months and for which well-respected doctors could not identify or treat. Three months into a self-imposed dietary regimen, all my symptoms lifted. The fact that it actually worked truly amazed me!

And here it was, working again!

Diet Makes a Difference

I believe deeply and passionately that what we eat makes a difference in our health. That makes sense, doesn't it? If diet can play a key role in helping us fight certain conditions, such as diabetes, heart disease or cancer, why can't it be used to aid reproduction? Well, it can, and many others—from mainstream doctors to alternative healthcare practitioners—agree. You can just Google "fertility diet" on the Internet to see.

Following a fertility diet, as I learned, is hard work—especially when it comes on top of so much other hard work and sacrifices we women with fertil-

ity issues make to meet our dream of motherhood. Its restrictions mean having to eat in every day, and I for one loved eating out. I didn't like cooking.

Easing the Process

What eased the process for me was not only the impressive degree of support from my husband and co-author, Pierre Giauque, but his cooking. He took it as a personal challenge to create a variety of dishes within the strict dietary requirements to support our efforts toward becoming parents.

Specifically, he asked himself, "How can I take this restrictive list of foods and still turn out original, savory dishes? How can I produce enough variety so that we never get bored and give up? And how can I keep all that cooking easy and manageable on top of so many other life demands, especially considering that, by the nature of the diet, we'll be shopping for sometimes hard-to-find produce and products and having to eat at home all the time?"

The result is the 60 or so flexible, easy-to-make recipes presented in this cookbook. Amazingly, you won't even notice these dishes have no sugar, dairy or wheat! And that's the point. Pierre also included information to make every step of the cooking process so straightforward that even a "kitchen klutz" like me could do it.

Not only did Pierre's recipes make it much easier to stick to the diet, but they also helped us reconnect as a couple during a very difficult and stressful time. Preparing, cooking and eating these meals kept us focused on a positive project toward parenthood that we could do together, and our relationship strengthened as a result.

Naturally, we wanted to share these recipes—along with our dietary insights gained through years of research and consulting with leaders in the field—in hopes that it could ease the burden on other couples struggling to become parents, just as it had eased ours. We wanted women, in particular, to feel as I did—healthy and empowered by this process.

In the end, I found it amazing what can happen when you feed your body what it needs to heal, you believe in yourself, and you surrender to possibility.

If eating this way worked for me, I believe it can work for you too. Of course, there is no guarantee that following any diet is going to get you pregnant; everyone is different. The worst case scenario is that you put your body in the healthiest, best possible position for conception—and that alone is a really good thing.

Here are some general tips that I found helpful on my journey:

1. Believe in yourself without doubt. See the end in mind and don't let go. Your future child needs you to believe in him or her.
2. Do all you can. You have more power than you think.
3. Nurture yourself along the way, give yourself breaks.
4. Surrender. This might be the hardest step of all. After you've done all you can, you need to let go and allow the mystery to unfold.

A Little About the Recipes

Pierre writes:

As Cindy mentioned, I developed the recipes in this cookbook as a challenge and to support our efforts to conceive. My aim was to create a full spectrum of easy-to-make dishes that together embody variety and flavor despite the dietary restrictions. You'll find that here, along with ethnically diverse dishes that evolved from my upbringing and travels.

Born and raised in Lausanne, Switzerland, my first forays into cooking were naturally French-inspired. However, through later travels, my cooking became infused with the flavors and styles of Italy, Spain, Portugal, eastern Africa, India, the U.S. and other places. As a result, you'll even find recipes here that are hybrids of multiple culinary cultures—all healthy and delicious.

Some of my signature dishes included here are *Lamb Curry in Coconut Milk*, *Crêpes Salée*, *Spicy Garbanzo Beans*, *Ground Turkey Mix* and a light version of *Chili Con Carne*. These are also favorites among friends and family.

Our hope is that in making these recipes, you'll experience a new adventure for cooking, enjoy the healthy, flavorful food, and not really notice too much that you're even on a diet. Even better, we hope that eating healthy like this becomes a habit for life.

About this Book

By design, this cookbook is intended to be an easy-to-use tool to support you on your journey toward parenthood. Here's how:

- In its layout, full color presentation and simple-to-follow recipes, this cookbook makes rigid dietary guidelines easy to take. Information is effortless to find, and guidelines and recipes, painless to follow.
- Recipes are practical, not sophisticated. They are straightforward, yet full of flavor, variety and ethnic diversity so you won't get bored and give up.
- We made our recipes flexible so that you can effortlessly accommodate substitutions for a less strict diet, or to meet your own dietary preferences or needs.
- We include expert advice. We base recipes on generally accepted dietary guidelines, those which represent current prevalent dietary wisdom in the area of fertility, and are backed by research and common sense. It's also the diet that worked for us.
- We wrote dietary guidelines so they're simple to follow. We also wrote this book as a supplement to your efforts to conceive; however, it is intentionally not a medical book filled with scientific analysis. We kept it simple: just stating what you can and cannot eat (or do) and why.
- Our cookbook provides it all in one place—everything you need to succeed on this diet, including what foods to buy and eat, and where to find them; basic equipment needed; cooking basics and more. If you have never followed a diet as strict as this one before or are new to cooking, we have a section for you!
- We understand what busy lives we all lead on top of the drain of fertility issues and we provide shortcut options to save on effort or time—such as accommodating the use of organic canned tomatoes instead of fresh ones, if it's easier or necessary.

Although our dietary guidelines and tips are backed by research and represent what worked for us, we encourage you to choose for yourself what makes sense to you on this journey. Everyone is different and has unique needs. Our recipes are flexible to accommodate changes if required.

Who this Book Is for

This cookbook is for:

- Women and couples who are having trouble conceiving—that is, they have been trying to conceive for six months or more without success—whether or not they seek medical assistance.

Even if medical procedures are required to aid conception, as in the case of blocked tubes, for example, optimal nutrition may still improve success of those procedures. Check with a reproductive endocrinologist (a fertility specialist) to learn more.

- Men who wish to support their partners in a cooking project they can share together as well as men with fertility issues themselves.

We also recommend that men go on the diet even if they have no known fertility issues themselves. Ten to 15 percent of couples have unexplained infertility and you can never know for sure how much of a couple's total fertility comes from that.

- Anyone interested in a healthier, cleaner diet for long-term health.
- Cooks and non-cooks alike, as this cookbook supports new cooks.

How to Use this Book

This is how we recommend you use this book:

- Review dietary guidelines to know what and how to eat. If you're only eating from our recipes, you don't have to memorize a thing! It is useful to know what to eat when you're not, however, or if you need to make substitutions.
- Review the *Getting Ready to Cook* chapter based on your needs. This section includes information and tips on what to buy, such as organic produce and wheat-free alternatives, and where to find them.
- Use the table of contents or index to decide which recipes you'd like to make.

- Follow the recipes. All recipes use the same consistent format for ease of use, with full color photos of the finished product, ingredients and selected stages of preparation.
- To make substitutions and additions based on your own personal nutritional needs or preferences, see the *Substitutions and Creativity* section of the *Getting Ready to Cook* chapter.

BBQ Marinated Asparagus

Asparagus is a wonderful vegetable for the barbeque, resulting in a dish that's flavorful and crunchy. In addition, asparagus contains plenty of folate, an important B vitamin that helps boost fertility and prevent birth defects. A barbeque is not required. You can also use the oven.

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Recipes



1

The finished dish



2

Ingredients

Ingredients:

- 1 lb green asparagus
- 2 Tbsp olive oil
- 1 Tbsp dry basil
- 1 Tbsp dry Italian herbs*
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- * See "Spices" on p.43.

EASY   

Preparation time: 10 min.

Cooking time: 5 min.

Serves 4

Recipe:

1. Cut off bottom ends of asparagus (yellow or hard portion).
2. Put asparagus in a glass or Tupperware container.
3. Add olive oil, herbs and minced garlic to container, mixing well and spreading all over asparagus (pict. 3).
4. Let stand for 2 or more hours (overnight is okay).
5. Light barbeque and let it warm up.

NOTE: You can also cook in the oven at 400°F for 10 minutes in a Pyrex dish (pre-heat first).

6. Put asparagus away from the fire and close the lid of barbeque.
7. Cook for 3 minutes and then turn over.
8. Cook another 2 to 3 minutes.
9. Remove from heat and serve.



Asparagus in a dish

Spicy Garbanzo Beans

Full of protein, this flavorful dish can be served on the side or as an appetizer, both warm and cold. It's also fast and easy-to-make.

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Recipes



1

The finished dish



2

Ingredients

Ingredients:

- 1 10 oz can of cooked garbanzo beans, drained
- 1 onion, diced
- 4 garlic cloves, minced
- 1 tsp turmeric
- 1 tsp paprika
- ¼ tsp pepper
- ¼ tsp salt
- 2 Tbsp olive oil

EASY 

Preparation time: 10 min.

Cooking time: 10 min.

Serves 2

Recipe:

1. Place olive oil in a pot, add diced onion and cook on medium high heat for 5 minutes (pict. 3), stirring regularly.
2. Add minced garlic and spices and mix well (pict. 4).
3. Add garbanzo beans and cook for 5 minutes (pict. 5).

TIP: You can use curry or cayenne pepper for a stronger flavor.

NOTE: If you work from dry beans (as opposed to those from a can), be sure to remove stones or damaged beans first, and soak beans overnight in cold water in the fridge before cooking. Soaking will remove the “bad” agent and prevent flatulence. Cook in boiling water for 1 to 2 hours (until soft). Drain and rinse.



Cooking onions



Adding spices



Adding garbanzo beans

Chicken with Bell Peppers and Mushrooms

This easy, colorful and tasty dish provides a light, fresh meal appropriate for any occasion. Serve with rice.

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Recipes



The finished dish

Ingredients:

2 chicken breasts
(about 1 lb)

1 onion, sliced

½ lb of mushrooms

3 bell peppers of mixed
color, such as red
and yellow

2 Tbsp of olive oil

¼ tsp salt

¼ tsp pepper

½ tsp paprika

1 tsp dry basil or 5 or
6 leaves of fresh basil,
chopped

EASY 

Preparation time: 15 min.

Cooking time: 15 min.

Serves 2

Recipe:

1. Cut chicken breast into strips about a ½-inch thick by about 2-inches long.
2. Remove top of bell peppers and seeds from the center.
3. Cut bell peppers into strips about a ¼-inch thick by 1-inch long.
4. Cut onion into thin strips.
5. Cut mushrooms into 4 pieces.
6. Put olive oil in a non-stick saucepan and heat on high for 1 minute.
7. Add onion and chicken, and sprinkle paprika and pepper on top (pict. 3).
8. Stir and cook for 2 minutes.
9. Lower heat to medium high.
10. Add bell peppers, then stir and cook for 5 minutes (pict. 4).
11. Add mushrooms and basil (pict. 5), stir, and if desired, adjust seasoning to taste.
12. Cook for another 2 minutes and serve.



2
Ingredients



3
Adding onions and spices



4
Cooking with bell peppers



5
Adding mushrooms and basil



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Your Fertility Diet by Week

To help track dietary habits, place a checkmark for each regimen you successfully follow that day. In the blank rows, write in dietary items you particularly want to track and draw a line through any you do not.

| M | Tu | W | Th | Fr | Sa | Su | Daily Regimen |
|---|----|---|----|----|----|----|--|
| | | | | | | | 1 glass of warm water with lemon in the morning |
| | | | | | | | Pre-natal (and other) vitamins |
| | | | | | | | Raspberry tea (pre-ovulation) |
| | | | | | | | Warm beverages (room temperature) only |
| | | | | | | | 6 to 8 glasses of purified water |
| | | | | | | | No processed sugar |
| | | | | | | | No overly processed foods |
| | | | | | | | No wheat |
| | | | | | | | No dairy |
| | | | | | | | No caffeine |
| | | | | | | | No coffee |
| | | | | | | | No alcohol |
| | | | | | | | No sodas and other bottled beverages |
| | | | | | | | Lean, organic meat only |
| | | | | | | | Organic – 80% everything else |
| | | | | | | | Veggies – 5+ servings, variety (1/2 cup=serving) |
| | | | | | | | No eating late (after 6 p.m.) |
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