Preconception Health Care Diet Guidelines
For Couples Planning to Conceive

ALL FOODS SHOULD BE FRESH AND ORGANICALLY GROWN / FED WHENEVER POSSIBLE
They are higher in nutritional value, lower in toxins, hormones and pesticides.
Do not overcook your foods.
Do not use microwave oven for cooking or defrosting.

IMPORTANT TIPS FOR SUCCESS
- Eat small meals frequently.
- Always drink a large glass of purified water 30mins before a meal and always keep very well hydrated.
- DON’T skimp on healthy fats - your reproductive system, hormones, eggs, sperm and developing baby relies on healthy fats for growth and developments.
- Enjoy coconut milk and coconut water (no added sugar) - it is a super food for fertility, pregnancy, breastfeeding and overall immunity.

FATS (20% of food in your diet)
You need to avoid toxic non-organic saturated fats, which may upset your PROSTAGLANDIN / HORMONE / NUTRIENT balance. This means heated fats and animal fats that are not organic.

NO FRIED FOOD except stir-fry. Cook with minimal amount of olive oil, sesame oil or coconut oil. These are monounsaturated fats, and will not saturate on heating.

USE LOTS OF COLD PRESSED OILS ON SALADS (extra virgin olive, flaxseed, nut oils, coconut oil). These oils are high in essential fatty acids if never heated. They should be kept out of light (in dark containers) in the fridge (except olive oil, which is fine at room temp). Add lemon pepper/garlic/herbs to make homemade salad dressing).

100% AVOID MARGARINES. This is manmade synthetic ‘poison’ and may have a negative effect on reproductive health, due to hydrogenated oils.
Instead use organic butter, avocado, banana, hummus; nut spreads (if fresh & refrigerated & kept away from light).
The best oils/ healthy fats: Organic Coconut Oil / Milk; Sesame Oil. Macadamia Oil, Organic Butter, Avocado, Olive Oil.

PROTEIN FOODS (30% of food in your diet)
You need an average sized serving (equivalent to the palm of your hand) of protein providing food at least 3 times a day before conception and 4 times a day during pregnancy.

This should be high quality protein either:
1. A PRIMARY protein, which comes from an ANIMAL, source, and is a COMPLETE protein (i.e. one which contains all the amino acids).

Or

2. A combination of SECONDARY proteins, which come from a PLANT source, and are INCOMPLETE proteins (i.e. they do not contain the full range of amino acids).

By combining TWO of the food groups below, you will have a COMPLETE vegetarian protein source.

1. NUTS
2. GRAINS/SEEDS
3. LEGUMES/PULSES
FISH
Include in diet at least 3 times weekly.
Low in saturated fats, high in essential fatty acids, especially deep sea / ocean / cold water fish, which are also less polluted, for example mackerel, mullet, salmon, taylor, trevally & sardines. Avoid large fish e.g. tuna, shark & swordfish (too high in mercury), and crustaceans can often be polluted. Fresh definitely preferable to tinned / frozen.
**Best Fish:** Wild Ocean fish, the smaller the better
**Avoid:** farm raised or river fish, large fish, any endangered species. Talk to your fishmonger; ask questions and learn which is the best fish, local to you.

CHICKEN & EGGS
Must be organic or antibiotic and hormone free.
Trim the skin to avoid fats. (Free range is not necessarily organic and may still be fed with hormones and antibiotics)

DAIRY
Avoid non-organic or long life cows’ milk/cheese. It creates mucus in fallopian tubes and can cause malabsorption in many people.
Natural acidophilus non-flavoured yoghurt can be consumed in moderation.
Use goat’s milk / cheese where possible.
**AVOID SOY milk** – it is not supportive to pregnancy or preconception health care.
Nut milks, Oat milk or Rice milk are also good options for those who are sensitive to cows’ dairy.

RED MEAT
Organic and in moderation.
Unless certified organically fed, avoid organ meats / offal / sausage / mince (or get the butcher to mince on site).
Organ meats contain high levels of pesticides/hormones and are best avoided unless organic. Avoid delicatessen/processed meats (high in fats, offal content and toxic preservatives). Trim all fat, unless organic grass fed.

LEGUMES/PULSES/GRAINS
Lentils / chickpeas / split peas / beans/ minimal or occasional tofu / tempeh (fermented soy is okay in moderation in context of a wholefood diet). Good vegetable protein. Must be combined as shown. Good detoxifiers and contain high fibre and are low GI.

NUTS/SEEDS
Raw / unsalted / fresh (store in fridge, away from light and eat within 2 weeks or freeze. Nuts should not taste bitter). Use in stir-fries, salads, and pasta dishes, as a snack. Soak overnight in spring water to activate nuts for easier digestibility.
Avoid dried fruit (high in sugar and often contains sulphur as preservative).

CARBOHYDRATES (50 % of food in your diet)
Keep consumption to moderate levels and it is very important to choose low glycaemic carbohydrates most of the time (most vegetables, pulses, whole (not refined) grains). High glycaemic foods (e.g. sugar, white/ refine grain and flour products) can disrupt your hormone, lower energy and strips your body of essential nutrients.
Refined carbohydrates leach nutrients from your body’s stores, which, in turn, increase your desire for these foods.
VEGETABLES – LOTS & LOTS EVERY DAY
Should make up minimum of 50% of your total food intake. Organic whenever possible.
Wide variety, especially dark green leafy / red and orange / avocado. Eat both raw and cooked regularly.

RAW – Juices – try carrot / celery / beetroot as a base (great way of ensuring adequate vegetable intake). Salads – use a wide variety of vegetables. Pale lettuce is not highly nutritious. Add chopped fresh herbs e.g. parsley & watercress.

COOKED – steamed/stir-fried/dry baked). (Root vegetables require light cooking / grating / juicing for absorption) Do not cook or defrost with microwaves. Discard green potatoes (toxic).

FRUIT 2 pieces daily, maximum (because of high sugar content). This includes fruit that is juiced, (dilute 70% Water: 30% Juice) though better eaten whole. Organic whenever possible.

GRAINS Refined grain bread / rice / pasta / pastries are to be limited to “occasional” foods only as they are HIGH GI. AVOID REFINED FLOUR PRODUCTS. Read bread packets carefully and avoid those containing preservatives / additives.

Best whole grains for preconception health care: Barley; Quinoa; Amaranth; Wheat Berry (whole grain only); Basmati Rice; Wild Rice; Brown Rice, Buckwheat, Oats, Spelt.

SUGAR AVOID ALL SWEET THINGS (includes honey, sugar substitutes, undiluted fruit juices, cakes, biscuits, soft drinks).
Especially avoid agave- it has been linked to miscarriage and is high in fructose. Stevia is allowed if you require a sweetener occasionally.
Rapadura sugar (raw organic sugar cane juice powder) is OK to use in cooking occasionally. It is nutrient dense.

ALCOHOL – AVOID 100% No amount of alcohol is safe during preconception health care for either women or men.

SOFT DRINKS AVOID 100%. These are full of dangerous chemicals, sugar (diet drinks include artificial sweeteners), preservatives, colourings and flavours that create a potent neurotoxic cocktail. Simply the worst liquid you could ever consume!
Try naturally carbonated mineral water with a dash of lime juice, lemon juice, bitters, and fruit juice.

BEVERAGES

COFFEE – AVOID 100%.
Related to fertility/pregnancy/fetal health problems. Coffee contains both caffeine and dangerous alkaloids linked to reduced male and female fertility.
Decaffeinated not recommended- dangerous chemicals are often used to decaffeinate coffee beans.
Cereal base substitutes (chicory) and Dandelion Root Coffee; Herbal tea and green tea are allowed.

TEA -OK in moderation. Choose organic.
2 cups weak, naturally low caffeine (not decaffeinated) max daily. Green and herb teas preferred.

PURIFIED CLEAN WATER
8– 12 glasses daily/ 2-3 L per day (or PBA free bottled). Mineral water OK occasionally. Unpurified tap water is high in many toxins and heavy metals, which are concentrated, not destroyed, by boiling. Do not store in soft plastic preferably. Glass or hard plastic is safe. Invest in a water filter for your home (look for a reverse osmosis or carbon ceramic water filter system).

If you are feeling dehydrated: add 5-10 drop of organic maple syrup + 1-2 drops of natural vanilla essence or chlorophyll to 500 mL of water. Drink plentifully.
A note about plastic water bottles- avoid PCB chemicals such as Bisphenol A. NEVER refill!!
Bisphenol A is used in some plastics, and can be found in common household items, including some can linings, water bottles, Clingfilm and baby bottles.
The chemical does get into the food and drink of products packaged in these plastics and studies are linking the use of bisphenol A with a number of health problems, including infertility and miscarriage as well as possible health effects on the brain, behaviour and prostate gland of foetuses, infants and children.

SPICES/CONDIMENTS
Please ensure that you add 1/2- 1 teaspoon of whole organic sea- salt to your cooking/ meals per day. This will keep your electrolytes in balance and stable.
Do not use commercial table salt. Pepper and spices are OK
Avoid any sauces containing sugar/salt/additives.
All spices are rich antioxidants- use plentifully. The fresher the better.

JUNK/ TAKEOUT/ PRE-PACKAGED FOODS
AVOID!

CIGARETTE SMOKING
Is harmful to you (and your baby’s) health. AVOID passive smoke also. A meta-analysis conducted in 2009 showed a 60% increase in subfertility with smoking with evidence of a dose dependent relationship with the number of cigarettes smoked.

EXERCISE
A varied program of regular low impact aerobic exercise minimum 30 minutes 3-4 times per week.
Rebounding particularly beneficial for heal of reproductive organs- make sure you wear a good strong supportive bra if you are rebounding for exercise.
Yoga also excellent for all aspects of reproductive health and is great for stress management. Exercise and getting out of the house will help keep your mood and spirit stay positive.