



# FOR MEN ONLY



## “We are pregnant”

Yes, you are a big part of it. Your partner is not the only one who gets pregnant – so to speak. But let’s step back. As a man, you are by no means a silent partner in the making of a baby. Just think about the mechanics of getting your sperm into the right place at just the right time. Then you might wonder if you are ready for the outcome of that act. You have more to consider than you might think. Take your overall health for example. The choices you make speak volumes about whether you will even be able to create a baby.

### *Desperately seeking semen*

The average healthy man can usually count on his sperm to do its job, but someone with a history of infections, drinking and smoking might be dealing with a different quality of sperm. Other lifestyle habits, your environment, as well as disease, can also be “sperm-unfriendly.”

❖ **Booze news...** alcohol can change the quality of sperm. Although alcohol may boost the sex drive, drinking has been linked to poor sexual performance.

❖ **Sperm that really smoke...** what good are lots of sperm if only a few work well? Smoking can make it harder for a man to get an erection. The sperm also can’t swim as fast to reach the “ready” egg. Smokers’ sperm has a harder time getting into the woman’s egg to create a pregnancy.

❖ **The right stuff...** you are what you eat. The truth behind that saying has not changed for decades. If your body is poorly fed, so are your sperm and sex drive.

❖ **Out of it...** cocaine, heroin and high doses of marijuana can kill sexual interest, sexual performance and sperm count.

❖ **Working grind...** sperm can be affected by toxins or poisons in your environment. You might face these on the job or at home and not realize it. Toxins before pregnancy could mean birth defects later.

❖ **What’s up doc?** Some medication and diseases take on a new meaning when baby planning. Cancer, mumps, diabetes, Hepatitis B, sexually transmitted infections and HIV can affect your chances for making pregnancy happen or having a healthy baby.



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## Wanted! Newborn looking for a great life & loving dad

Men, who are ready to become involved parents, give their children a head start over those children whose dad's fear the leap into fatherhood. How do you feel?

### *The fatherhood test!*

Ask yourself...

1. Could I handle a child and a job at the same time? Do I qualify for a parental leave?
2. Would I be ready for changes to the daily routine to accommodate the baby's needs?
3. Can I afford to support a child? Do I know how much it costs to raise a child?
4. Do I want to raise a child where I live now? Would I be willing and able to move?
5. Do I like children? How do I feel about having a child around all the time?
6. Am I patient enough to deal with the noise and the confusion and the 24 hour a day responsibility? What kind of time and space do I need for myself?
7. Do I want to become a father some day?

### *Talk it out*

- ❖ Talk with your partner about this life-changing decision.
- ❖ Speak out about how ready you are to become a parent.
- ❖ Voice concerns as you think about them.
- ❖ Make sure you understand, support and believe in each other.
- ❖ Sort out how your work and starting a family might conflict.
- ❖ Bring some work colleagues together to promote a healthy workplace that supports the needs of fathers.

### *Make plans to...*

- ❖ Research your family history for possible genetic concerns.
- ❖ Have regular medical check ups.
- ❖ Review and understand your rights and the possible risks at work.
- ❖ Be aware of possible environmental risks in your home and through your hobbies.
- ❖ Eat well, exercise regularly and don't abuse alcohol or drugs.

### FOR HELP CLOSE TO HOME CONTACT:

Health care provider: \_\_\_\_\_

Local public health unit: Call INFOline at 1-800-268-1154 / 416-341-5518 \_\_\_\_\_

Sexual health clinic: \_\_\_\_\_

Groups or programs for fathers: \_\_\_\_\_

Fertility clinic: \_\_\_\_\_

Genetic clinic: \_\_\_\_\_