

# How I Beat The Odds And Got Pregnant Naturally

## *5 Simple Ways To Naturally Improve Your Fertility*

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Did you know that, according to the National Center for Health Statistics, 12.3% of women in the U.S. between 15-44 years old experience infertility? That is 7.5 million women!

I was one of those women, and at 37 years old, my biological clock was ticking. Tick, tick, tick...

After trying to get pregnant for 7 years with my second child, my ob-gyn finally encouraged me to get a hysterosalpingogram (HSG), which is an imaging test used to examine the cavity of the uterus and the Fallopian tubes. The results showed that both of my Fallopian tubes were blocked.

I was in shock...how could this happen? After all, I had no problems conceiving my first child. He was born 14 years before. Of course, I was much younger then...only 23 years old.

Now, the doctor was telling me that I wasn't a "spring chicken" anymore. (Thanks Doc!) At 37 years old, he recommended in vitro fertilization as the best way for me to pregnant. This was very upsetting. I didn't feel "old" and certainly did not want artificial hormones in my body!

Devastated, I left the clinic with my husband, crying huge tears of sadness. We wanted another child but clearly my body wasn't cooperating. I felt like a failure. Yet, my gut told me not to do in vitro fertilization.

### **Fast Forward 2 Years...**

I still did not have a solution to my infertility – at least one that I was comfortable with – so I decided to look at alternative medicine, and made some very interesting discoveries.

Now, before I share with you the 5 simple ways I was able to reverse my infertility and give birth to my beautiful little girl Ella, who is one of my greatest joys in life, there is one thing you need to know about me.

I like working hard, and prided myself on being a career mom. So, like many North American women with a "good job", I was anxious to get back to my career after having my first child, Dominic, in 1996. I loved the insurance industry with a passion. Sure, it was a male-dominated industry and being a minority woman under 40 years old, I always felt like I had to prove my self-worth. But I thrived on it. When my business associates and mentors showered me with praise for doing such a terrific job and encouraged me to join the Board of Directors of industry

organizations and non-profits, of course I followed their advice. All I wanted was to build my resume and get ahead.

One of the women working in my office was very concerned about me. She said I was "on the go" all the time, and was afraid I might drop dead from a heart attack one day. I didn't understand why she thought I was pushing myself too hard. I was "fine" thank you very much. After all, I was only getting started!

Another insurance colleague told me I needed to slow down so I could "smell the roses" and enjoy my accomplishments. I was in complete denial. Instead, I kept telling myself I wasn't doing enough.

Finally, a workaholic at 39, I came to the stark realization that I had prioritized my career over my family. Miraculously, my husband hadn't divorced me. He knew I loved my career and supported me in everything I did. But something had to change. Fast.

So I gave myself a break and replaced my "more than full-time" job with something less time consuming. No more driving 2 hours "to and from" the office. No more "office politics" – that in itself was awesome! I stayed busy, but shifted my primary focus to being a loving wife to my husband, and mom to my 15 year-old son Dominic, who was a sophomore in high school at the time.



## What Does All This Have To Do With Getting Pregnant?

Well, one of the things I discovered that initiated the change in me was a study by a group of U.S. researchers who found that workaholics have lower chances of getting pregnant. Go figure!



In fact, Audrey Gaskins, the lead author of the study and researcher at Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health, explained that women who work hard physically or work longer hours find it harder to get pregnant.

According to the study, working more than 40 hours a week was linked with taking *20 percent longer* to get pregnant compared to women who worked 21 to 40 hours.

What! Here I was, trading what I truly wanted in my heart – which was another child – for some recognition and a paycheck. That was my wake up call. "Edna, how badly do you want this?"

Now, I'm not saying that you have to quit your job to get pregnant. That may not even be an option you want to consider. However, if you're struggling with infertility and want get pregnant, it may be time to evaluate your schedule to see whether you can reduce the long hours and minimize the stress and strain on your body.

As I said, I stayed active...I just worked LESS. I managed my schedule better, and because my child-rearing years were quickly coming to a close, I spent some of my freed-up time researching and talking to wellness professionals who practiced alternative, naturopathic, homeopathic and integrative medicine, looking for a solution. Some that even specialized in working with women who struggled with infertility. It totally changed the way I took care of myself...and my family. 8 months later, I was pregnant. No pharmaceuticals, no in vitro fertilization, just plain old-fashioned fun! Naturally.

If you're reading this, my guess is that you are either trying to get pregnant yourself, or someone near and dear to you is. Before you give up or take the "Big Pharma" route, try out these 5 easy tips for improving your fertility naturally. They worked for me, as well as for other women I've shared them with. Perhaps they will work for you. You have nothing to lose and everything to gain.

## 1) Take Care Of Your Body Through Regular Exercise and an Organic Diet

By the time I was 38, the long work days and chronic stress had taken a toll on my health. I had developed various health problems including painful abdominal cramps, chronic neck and shoulder pain, high cholesterol, stomach problems, allergy problems, vitamin D deficiency, uterine fibroids, and female reproductive issues.



I was "fine" but my body was worn out! I wasn't eating a healthy diet and I had stopped exercising.

### Healthy Body Weight

According to several studies, a healthy body is the first step to a healthy pregnancy. Being overweight can interfere with a woman's ability to ovulate normally, decreasing her chances of getting pregnant. An Australian study investigating the effects of weight loss in overweight women found that *60 of the 67 women* began to ovulate spontaneously after losing an average of 20 pounds. I know, those extra-large mocha frappuccino lattes are delicious, but they may just be standing in the way of your ultimate goal!

And what effect does stress have on body weight? Some women lose weight when they're stressed, however if you're like me, you gain it. So slow down, and don't let yourself get worked up by what other people do – or don't do. It's costing you more than it's worth.

### Exercise

Studies have shown that at least 30 minutes of fitness activity per week can increase ovulation. To keep yourself motivated, make sure the exercise you choose is something you enjoy like walking, jogging, biking, aerobics or swimming.

Since I love walking and love listening to great tunes, I found a way to combine them; walking up a steep incline 60 minutes a day, 3 times a week, while listening to some of my favorite music. I had fun and it invigorated my body!

Strength training is also an important part of any fitness program. Push-ups, abdominal crunches and leg squats don't require any equipment. I strengthened my arms using light weights 3 times a week. I did 5 lb. weights at first, then increasing it to 10 lbs. every so often. I also did abdominal crunches and stomach exercises every other day. It helped strengthen my body and allowed me to release any built up stress.

### Organic Foods & Supplements

Adopting healthy eating habits and freeing your body of toxins also increases your chances of getting pregnant. Several studies have even suggested a link between the use of pesticides and insecticides and fertility problems.

Don't count on the big food manufacturers for your health; take matters into your own hands. Choose organic and all-natural foods, including fresh vegetables, fruits, whole grain bread and cereal, lean meat, reduced-fat dairy foods, and essential fats, which can be found in nuts, seeds and avocados. Then supplement your meals with a high quality multi-vitamin to optimize your nutrient intake.

I also took folic acid daily because according to medical research, taking at least 1 mg of folic acid helps decrease the incidence of spinal cord abnormalities in fetuses. Aren't our bodies amazing? With the right nutrients we can heal ourselves and reduce our chances of future illnesses.

## **2) Give Up Alcohol & Smoking**

Swedish research found that women who drank two alcoholic beverages a day decreased their fertility by *60 per cent*.

Since I wanted to get pregnant, I said goodbye to my favorite happy hour drinks of 'gin & tonic' and 'rum & coke'. I also stopped drinking wine at dinner time. I knew it wasn't going to be forever, but it was worth it for the time being.



According to several medical studies, female smokers take longer to get pregnant and are more likely to experience infertility. Cigarette smoke contains toxins which can damage your eggs and interfere with the fertilization process. Thankfully this wasn't an issue for me since I didn't smoke, but I included it here because it's so important to understand the effects of smoking on your fertility.

So if you want to increase your chances of getting pregnant, it's time to "kick the habit"!

### 3) Manage Stress through Relaxation & Mindfulness

Of course, building a healthy reproductive system is important. Studies show that women with chronic stress produced hormones like prolactin and cortisol which negatively impacts ovulation. Negative feelings and depression also contributed to hormonal irregularities.

My body was stressed out from working so much. I knew I had to do something to relax my body and quiet my busy analytical mind. Some of the relaxation techniques I tried included meditation, deep breathing, and yoga, which involves meditation.



To date, few studies measure how meditation positively impacts conception rates. Yet, a growing number of medical doctors believe that meditation is a powerful way for people to manage their emotions.

Personally, I am thrilled to hear that some clinics now offer mind-body classes to accompany medical treatment. The correlation is un-deniable.

I started meditating 15 minutes a day, for 21 days straight, until I formed the habit of meditating regularly. When meditating, I learned that proper breathing is important. Breathing deeply releases your body of toxins and helps release any tension. It feels great and is essential to your health.

Here's an exercise that I learned along the way that I found very refreshing. When you breathe in, feel your breath go all the way down to your uterus and visualize the oxygen revitalizing your uterus, ovaries and vagina. When exhaling, imagine that you are releasing the thoughts and feelings no longer serving you. Out with the old, in with the new!

### 4) Acupuncture & Chinese Medicine

Acupuncture is a form of treatment in traditional Chinese medicine which involves inserting fine needles through the skin at specific points to relieve pain and promote healing. Now, before you skip over this segment at the thought of being pricked with tiny needles, hear me out.

At age 37, I started experiencing unbearable pain in my female reproductive organs after my period ended. It was a throbbing pain which radiated from my lower abdomen all the way to my leg. I felt like I was constipated. While I knew that I had uterine fibroids, my ob-gyn told me that what I was experiencing was not normal, but she could not give me an accurate diagnosis.

I asked her to give me a non-pharmaceutical option to stop the pain. She had nothing she could recommend to me that didn't include taking drugs.



I have always been skeptical about acupuncture since I didn't like the idea of having needles inserted into my body. However, I was desperate to stop the pain – without the use of pharmaceuticals – so I decided to try acupuncture in September 2011. In addition to the acupuncture treatment, my acupuncturist recommended that I take Tong Jing Pian/Tong Jing Wan, a Chinese herbal supplement that helps with painful periods and fibroids. After only 2 treatments of acupuncture, along with the herbal supplement recommended to me, the pain was gone.

While I cannot prove that the acupuncture treatment and herbal medicine helped unblock my Fallopian tubes I know that the treatment promoted healing from the inside. I could feel it.

Studies indicate that acupuncture helps activate the brain to release hormones that stimulate the ovaries, adrenal glands and other organs involved in reproduction. According to Dr. Lisa Lilienfield, a family practice and pain management specialist at the Kaplan Center for Integrative Medicine in McLean, Virginia, acupuncture can help increase a woman's fertility by improving blood flow to the ovaries and uterus. This improved blood flow can help thicken the lining of the uterus, increasing the chances of conception.

Try it. I found it wasn't what I thought it would be like, and began to look forward to my sessions because I could feel the positive impact on my body.

## 5) Treat Yourself To Regular Deep Tissue Massages

A 2010 clinical study conducted at Cedars-Sinai Medical Center in Los Angeles collected findings of healthy adults who were assigned to receive three types of massages: deep tissue, Swedish, and light touch. (Sign me up for that kind of study!)



After only one session, participants exhibited significant decreases in the level of cortisol, a stress hormone. They discovered that receiving a massage activates the body on an internal level to respond to and correct the physiological imbalance caused by stress.

Moreover, Deep Tissue Massage improves our overall physiological health. It breaks up adhesions, relaxes the body, promotes circulation, and relieves stress. Studies show that deep tissue massages can prepare the body to conceive, as it helps with the elimination of toxins and facilitates blood flow to the ovaries, which is vital to egg maturation and ovulation.

For many years, I experienced chronic pain in my neck, shoulders and upper back. My stress knots had gotten worse over the years since I wasn't taking care of my physical health. Now that I wanted to increase my chances of getting pregnant, I scheduled myself for a deep tissue massage every week for 2 months, followed with bi-weekly for the next 3 months. Not only did I feel better after my sessions, I believe it had a direct impact on my health and ability to get pregnant.

## In Conclusion...

The effort to conceive can be stressful, especially for women who have blocked or scarred Fallopian tubes, endometriosis, or hormonal fluctuations. While conventional medicine approaches to treating infertility such as pharmaceuticals, injections, or in vitro fertilization (IVF) have been successful, women need to be informed about alternative methods.

I believe many women would love to get pregnant naturally, if they could. The fact is, artificial methods for fertility enhancement are usually very invasive and aggressive, and can be a very painful ordeal. Not to mention expensive.

Based on my experience, it is worth taking the time to learn about natural techniques before turning to conventional medicine methods.

That's why, after getting pregnant and seeing the powerful effects of holistic health practices, I launched [The Wellness Institute](#) and [Wellness Spring](#), to share what I had learned with women who wanted real and lasting health.

If you're looking to get pregnant or simply want to experience greater health, I encourage you to ask questions, do your research, and explore the alternatives.

In my journey, I've discovered how truly amazing it is that the human body can heal itself through holistic treatments, simply by focusing on the mind, body and spirit. I had nearly lost all hope of conceiving a second child at the age 37.

Using the holistic health methods I have shared with you here, I was able to conceive my miracle child, Ella, at the age of 39.

Ella Eve Niña Fernandez was born 6 days before Christmas.

She is the best Christmas gift we've ever received. She turns 4 this year, on December 19<sup>th</sup>.



Thank you for reading this article. I hope it inspires you to give these techniques a try.

I look forward to hearing YOUR story... Please reach out to me through the [contact page](#) on my website.

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