

Seafood-rich diet may help couples get pregnant faster

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Couples who eat more seafood tend to have sexual intercourse more

often and get pregnant faster than other couples trying to conceive, according to a new study published in the Endocrine Society's *Journal of Clinical Endocrinology & Metabolism*.

Seafood is an important source of protein and other nutrients for women who are or may become pregnant, but concerns about mercury have led some women to avoid fish when trying to conceive. According to the Food and Drug Administration and the Environmental Protection Agency, 90 percent of the fish eaten in the United States is low in mercury and safe to eat. Although the agencies recommend two to three servings of lower-mercury fish per week, 50 percent of pregnant women still eat far less than the recommended amount.

"Our study suggests [seafood](#) can have many reproductive benefits, including shorter time to [pregnancy](#) and more frequent sexual activity," said one of the study's authors, Audrey Gaskins, Sc.D., of Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health in Boston, Mass. "Our study found that couples who consume more than two servings of seafood per week while trying to get pregnant, had a significantly higher frequency of [sexual intercourse](#) and shorter time to pregnancy."

In the [prospective cohort study](#), researchers from Harvard followed 500 Michigan and Texas couples from the Longitudinal Investigation of Fertility and the Environment (LIFE) Study for one year to determine the relationship between seafood intake and time to pregnancy. Participants recorded their seafood intake and sexual activity in daily journals.

The researchers found that 92 percent of couples who ate seafood more than twice a week were pregnant at the end of one year, compared to 79 percent among couples consuming less seafood. The association between seafood and faster time to pregnancy was not completely explained by more frequent sexual activity, suggesting other biological factors were at

play. These could include effects on semen quality, ovulation or embryo quality, Gaskins said.

"Our results stress the importance of not only female, but also male diet on time to pregnancy and suggests that both partners should be incorporating more seafood into their diets for the maximum fertility benefit," she said.

More information: "Seafood Intake, Sexual Activity, and Time to Pregnancy," *Journal of Clinical Endocrinology & Metabolism* (2018).

Provided by The Endocrine Society

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