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Mediterranean diet not only boosts health, but also improves fertility: Study

Infertility is a global health concern affecting 48 million couples and 186 million individuals worldwide

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With an emphasis on fruits, vegetables and legumes, the Mediterranean diet has long been applauded for its multiple health benefits. Now, new research shows that it may also help overcome infertility, making it a non-intrusive and affordable strategy for couples trying to conceive.

Conducted by Monash University, the University of the Sunshine Coast, and the University of South Australia, the review found that the Mediterranean diet can improve fertility, assisted reproductive technology (ART) success, and sperm quality in men.

Specifically, researchers identified that the anti-inflammatory properties of a Mediterranean diet can improve couples' chances of conception.

"Research shows inflammation can affect fertility for both men and women, affecting sperm quality, menstrual cycles, and implantation. So, in this study we wanted to see how a diet that reduces inflammation, such as the Mediterranean diet, might improve fertility outcomes.

"Encouragingly, we found consistent evidence that by adhering to an anti-inflammatory diet, one that includes lots of polyunsaturated or 'healthy' fats, flavonoids (such as leafy green vegetables), and a limited amount of red and processed meat, we can improve fertility", said the researchers.

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