



# EVERY DAY FERTILITY DISRUPTORS

Please note, this is not medical advice — just recommendations from a fertility coach who is also on the journey.

Here's an overview of suggested lifestyle changes for fertility. I hope it's not too overwhelming! I am super happy to walk through which lifestyle changes are most important for you based on your case and what is accessible to you, so it feels more manageable. Also, not all changes are necessary to have a successful pregnancy. These are just evidence based things that are proven to strengthen fertility!

## Alcohol, Smoking, Drugs

- **Alcohol, vapes, nicotine, marijuana, cocaine, exstacy etc**
  - **Female** - Causes oxidative stress on eggs, DNA damage, inflammation, hormonal changes, early menopause, affects circulation and blood flow etc.
  - **Male** - Causes inflammation, oxidative stress on sperm, which damages DNA, lowers testosterone, sperm count, motility, and quality.

## What Are They And Why Are They Bad?

- **Why are they bad?**
  - Affect egg and sperm quality, increased aneuploidy risk, lower ovarian reserve, oxidative stress, inflammation, impaired circulation, hormone disruption, ovulation disruption, endometrial disruption, lower implantation rates, impaired fetal development, increased pregnancy loss rates, and lower sperm count and motility.
- **What toxins/chemicals are bad?**
  - Bisphenol A (BPA), Butylated hydroxyanisole (BHA), Cadmium, Environmental toxins, Flame Retardants (PBDEs), Formaldehyde, Fragrance, Glycol Ethers, Heavy metal exposure, Lead, Mercury, Microplastics, Mold, Parabens, Pesticides, PFAS, Phthalates, Retinol, Retinoids, Sodium laureth sulfate, Toluene, and Triclosan.



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## Where Do Toxins/Chemicals Show Up

### In the Kitchen (Food & Drink)

- **Nonstick Cookware:** PFAS ("forever chemicals") found in Teflon and similar coatings.
- **Cutting boards, spatulas, dish soap, sponges, tongs, tea bags etc.**
- **Canned Goods:** BPA or BPS in the plastic linings of metal cans.
- **Plastic Storage:** Phthalates and microplastics that leach from containers (especially when heated).
- **Tap Water:** Potential lead (from old pipes), mercury, chlorine, and pesticide runoff.
- **Produce:** Pesticide and herbicide residues on non-organic fruits and vegetables.
- **Processed Foods:** Synthetic food dyes, artificial preservatives, and "natural flavors."
- **Seafood:** Mercury and PCBs in large fish (tuna, swordfish) or farm-raised varieties.

### Personal Care (Body etc)

- **Cosmetics:** Lead in lipsticks, formaldehyde in nail polish, and PFAS in "long-wear" makeup.
- **Skin & Hair Care:** Parabens (preservatives) and phthalates in lotions, shampoos, and soaps.
- **Feminine Hygiene:** Bleached cotton (dioxins) and fragrances in tampons or pads.
- **Medication:** Both prescription and over-the-counter drugs may contain substances like retinoids and NSAIDs.
- **Dental Care:** Triclosan in antibacterial toothpastes and PFAS in some dental floss coatings.
- **Clothing:** Polyester underwear, clothing etc etc.

### Inside the Home (Air & Surfaces)

- **Dust:** Acts as a "magnet" for flame retardants, lead, and pesticide particles tracked inside.
- **Upholstery & Mattresses:** Flame retardants (PBDEs) and stain-resistant coatings (PFAS) on couches and carpets.
- **Cleaning Supplies:** Harsh solvents, ammonia, and synthetic scents in multi-surface cleaners and laundry detergents. Aspen
- **Flooring:** VOCs (Volatile Organic Compounds) from new carpets, vinyl (PVC), and floor finishes.
- **Home Goods:** Phthalates in vinyl shower curtains and Formaldehyde in "fast fashion" bedding or pressed-wood furniture.





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### External & Environmental Exposures

- **Receipts:** High levels of BPA/BPS on thermal paper (which absorbs quickly through the skin).
- **Dry Cleaning:** Perchloroethylene ("perc"), a solvent used to clean clothes.
- **Outdoor Air:** Exhaust from cars, industrial emissions, and drift from agricultural pesticides.
- **Yard & Garden:** Herbicides (like glyphosate) and chemical fertilizers used on lawns.
- **Electronics:** Lead, cadmium, and flame retardants found in the internal components of phones and computers. Plus EMF from computers, cell phones, ear buds etc

### Stealth & Biological Toxins

- **Mold:** Mycotoxins that grow in damp areas (behind walls, under sinks) and disrupt the immune system.
- **Heavy Metals:** Lead in old house paint (pre-1978), cadmium in cheap jewelry, and arsenic in some soil or rice products.
- **Invisible Gases:** Radon gas seeping from the ground into basements and carbon monoxide from faulty heaters.



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## Specific Toxins

- **Bisphenol A (BPA):** Found in many plastics, including food containers and water bottles: Lower ovarian reserve, poorer egg quality, increased aneuploidy risk, hormonal imbalance, lower implantation rates, increased pregnancy loss rates, lower sperm count and motility.
- **Cadmium:** Found in rechargeable batteries, plastic production, organ meats, paint pigment, tobacco smoke, and pesticides, cadmium can lead to decreased sperm quality and irregular cycles in women.
- **Environmental toxins:** The worst pesticides and herbicides appear to be dicamba (49% decrease in fertility), glyphosate (39%), 2,4-D (29%), organophosphates (25%), and thiocarbamates (24%). When infertile couples seek IVF, those with the highest levels of PCBs were much more unlikely to achieve pregnancy.
- **Flame Retardants (PBDEs):** Found in couch foam, carpet padding, and electronics. These can accumulate in human fat tissue.
- **Fragrance:** Often listed as "parfum," these proprietary blends can contain hundreds of undisclosed chemicals, including phthalates, which act as endocrine disruptors that can interfere with hormonal signaling and negatively impact reproductive health.
- **Formaldehyde:** Common in hair-straightening treatments, nail polishes, and some "fast fashion" clothing.
- **Glycol Ethers:** Solvents found in some paints, cleaning products, and cosmetics.
- **Heavy metal exposure:** Disrupts hormones, negatively affects egg and sperm quality, increases pregnancy loss risk, affects embryo development, and affects the immune system.
- **Lead:** Found in old homes, traditional remedies, jewelry, and imported pottery, lead is linked to pregnancy-induced hypertension and pregnancy loss.





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## Specific Toxins

- **Mercury:** Found in canned food, bottled water, and fish, high levels of mercury can impact fertility.
- **Microplastics:** Are known endocrine disruptors and have been found in: Ovaries, semen, placenta, follicular fluid, bloodstream.
- **Mold:** Get your home or work checked for mold if you can! It increases inflammation, disrupts hormones, lowers egg and sperm quality, impairs implantation, impairs gut and immune health, increases risk of pregnancy loss.
- **Parabens:** Commonly found in cosmetics as preservatives, parabens can also be found in foods.
- **Pesticides:** Contain organochlorine compounds that can disrupt reproductive function. Pesticides can be found in food, body oils, essential oils, and cocoa butter.
- **PFAS:** Are water- and grease-resistant chemicals found in drinking water as well as in a wide range of consumer products such as nonstick cookware, waterproof clothing, food packaging, stain-resistant coatings on carpets and upholstery, paints, and personal care products. "PFAS can disrupt our reproductive hormones and have been linked with delayed puberty onset and increased risks for endometriosis and polycystic ovary syndrome in few previous studies.
- **Phthalates:** Found in plastics, personal care products, and fragrances, phthalates may be associated with all the things listed above
- **Retinoids:** Taken orally or as a topical anti-aging treatment, retinoids may cause problems with the growth of the developing fetus.
- **Toluene:** A solvent found in many nail products and hair dyes.
- **Triclosan:** Often found in "antibacterial" soaps and some toothpastes; it's a known endocrine disruptor.



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## What Can We Do About It

- **Check products on**
  - [EWG Healthy Living App](#) (Environmental Working Group)
  - [Yuka](#)
  - [Think Dirty](#)
  - [INCI Beauty](#)
  - [CosmEthics](#)
- **Cell phones and computers**
  - Use EMF blockers and make sure to turn on airplane mode when you can, don't put anywhere near your head or reproductive organs, this includes laptops, put phone/computer in other room when sleeping, turn off wireless internet and use plug in when possible, use speaker phone when talking on phone instead of wireless ear buds.
- **Don't touch receipts**
  - They act like hormones
    - BPA and BPS are *endocrine disruptors*. They mimic estrogen in the body and can throw off hormone balance, which is crucial for ovulation, egg quality, sperm health, and overall fertility.
  - They absorb through your skin
    - Studies show BPA/BPS from receipts can enter the bloodstream within seconds to minutes, and the absorption increases if your hands are moist or you've used lotion/hand sanitizer.
- **Don't buy anything with the word "Fragrance"**
  - The word "fragrance" or "parfum" on a label can legally represent hundreds of undisclosed chemicals. Many of these belong to a group called phthalates, often used to make scents last longer.
  - Don't use glade plugins, scented candles, air fresheners in car
  - Use instead
    - All natural essential oils (high quality)
    - Realm-healthy air mist
- **Plastics**
  - Switch from plastic bottles, containers, to glass whenever possible.





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## House Products

- **Cleaning products**
  - Try not to use bleach or use natural bleach
  - Use instead Use vinegar or baking soda or
  - [Branch Basics](#)
  - [Aspen](#)
- **Laundry detergent**
  - [Branch Basics](#)
  - [Molly's Suds](#)
  - Take out of plastic coverings before using if applicable
- **Toilet paper**
  - Try to get most natural one you can
  - [Bamboo Toilet Paper](#)
  - Reel Toilet Paper



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## Kitchen Products

- **Ditch the Plastic:** Switch to [glass Tupperware](#), [stainless steel or ceramic pans](#), and (except for meat. Never microwave plastic.
- No microwaves, don't microwave plastics ever
- No plastic cutting boards except for meat, otherwise use stainless steel or bamboo (don't cut meat on bamboo because the germs can get stuck in it)
  - [Farberware Nonslip Bamboo Cutting Board](#)
- Pots, pans
  - Use stainless steel as much as possible
  - [Green Pan](#)
- Spatulas
  - Bamboo or stainless steel
  - [Riveira Bamboo Cooking Spoons](#)
- Tongs
  - [Salt & York Wooden Tongs Kitchen Long handle](#)
- Tupperware
  - Use glass containers instead of plastic
- Dishwasher detergent
  - Take out of plastic covering before using (if have kind with plastic) Plastic can rub off onto dishes.
  - Make sure no fragrances
  - [Branch Basics](#)
- Dishwashing Gloves
  - [If You Care Latex Gloves](#)
- Sponges
  - [Adea sponges](#)
- Dish brush
  - [Kitchen Brush Bamboo](#)
- **Use a fan when cooking!**





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## Beauty Products

- [List of ingredients that are bad](#)
  - Parabens, retinol, formaldehyde, phthalates, sodium laureth sulfate, fragrance, butylated hydroxyanisole (BHA) etc etc.
- **Cosmetic products to avoid:**
  - Anti-aging creams with lactic, glycolic, AHA and BHA acids
  - Hair dyes with ammonia, peroxide, p-phenylenediamine, diaminobenzene, and *all* dark permanent hair dyes
  - Liquid hand soaps with Triclosan, aka Antibacterial hand soaps
  - Nail polish & removers with formaldehyde
  - Skin lighteners with hydroquinone
  - Glitter/shimmer. Don't use!
    - Literally putting microplastics into your body
- **Nail polish, fake nails, nail glue**
  - The fumes are what's especially bad, so wear a mask when applying etc.
- **Hair dye**
  - Try not to let it touching scalp, wear a mask when applying
  - Ammonia free
  - [Overtone Semi Permanent Conditioner](#)
  - [Radico Colour Me Organic](#)
  - [Herbatint Permanent Hair Dye](#)
  - [Naturtint](#)
    - 90% natural, so not perfect, but better than others!
  - Aveda, Mr Smith, O&M Cleantone color conditioners
- **Clean beauty products**
  - <https://www.linkdolly.com/karlyalane>



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- **Makeup:**

- Merit
- Ilia
- Well people
- Honest Company
- Makeup remover
  - [Honest Makeup Remover Wipes, Daily Facial Cleanser Towelettes](#)
  - Biom
- Eye gels
  - [Doppeltree All Natural Caffeine Under Eye Patches & Hydrogel Masks](#)
    - Not confirmed pregnancy safe, but ingredients show it is ok
- Mascara
  - [Honest Clean Mascara](#)
- Eyeliner
  - [ILIA - Clean Line Gel Liner](#)
- Cover up
  - [Urban Decay](#)
- Blush
  - [Bare Minerals](#)

- **Face Care/Skin care:**

- Face Wash
  - [OSEA Ocean Cleanser 5 oz - Nourishing Facial Cleansing Gel](#)
- Face scrub
  - [OSEA Seaglow Resurfacing Face Cleanser and Scrub 1.7 oz - 2-in1- For All Skin Types - Facial Exfoliator and Cleanser - Clean Beauty - Vegan Skincare](#)
- Face cream
  - [OSEA Seabiotic Water Cream](#)
- Eye serum
  - [OSEA Ocean Eyes® Age-Defying Eye Serum](#)
  - Ocean eyes roller
- **Other brands:** Dime, Cocokind

- **Sunscreen:**

- [ThinkBaby](#)
- [CocoKind](#)
- [Solara](#)







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## Personal Care Products

- **Shampoo and body wash**

- [The Honest Company 2-in-1 Cleansing Shampoo and Body Wash for Sensitive Skin Gentle Tear-Free Hypoallergenic Baby with Naturally Derived Ingredients Fragrance Free](#)
- [JVN](#) shampoo and conditioner is another one
- [Under Luna](#)

- **Conditioner**

- [The Honest Company Silicone-Free Conditioner, Gentle Tear-Free Hypoallergenic Baby Hair Care with Naturally Derived Ingredients, Fragrance-Free for Sensitive Skin](#)

- **Toothbrush and paste**

- [Suri](#)
- [Hydroxyapatite Toothpaste](#)

- **Deodorant**

- [Each & Every Aluminum Free Deodorant for Women & Men](#)

- **Menstrual products**

- Tampons/pads. Get organic ones or use Diva cups, free bleed, etc

- **Underwear**

- Cotton or linen clothing especially for women who have endometriosis

- **Men**

- Men, no tight underwear
- No polyester
- [Nads Underwear for Men](#)

- **Resources:**

- [Environmental Toxins and Infertility - StatPearls - NCBI Bookshelf](#)



## Additional Considerations

It's important to note that these fertility disruptors suggestions are never "one size fits all." The specific disruptors that are important for you to cut out depend on your unique medical history, lifestyle factors, and previous testing and treatment outcomes.

My goal as a Fertility Coach and Educator is to help you learn about options that are available which may improve your chances of a successful pregnancy. While I provide the suggestions and research to empower your journey, a thorough consultation with your medical team—including your RE, endocrinologist, naturopathic doctor, reproductive immunologist, etc.—is crucial to finalizing your clinical plan.

I am here to help you prep for those appointments, make sense of the results, and assist with next steps. Please reach out with any questions!



Hi, I'm Mariah Tuffy Joseph, MSW — a Fertility Coach and Educator. I offer personalized support, guidance, education, tools and resources to help you navigate the practical, physical, emotional and relational challenges of fertility, pregnancy loss, and sexual health. I specialize in helping clients uncover and address root causes of fertility challenges and recurrent pregnancy loss, as well as providing guidance for natural and IVF conception, especially for women over 35.

I lead One on One and Couples Sessions. I also hold Online and In Person Support Groups for women (South Florida, USA).

I am on this intense life changing fertility journey with you—after 3 years, 3 losses, multiple fertility programs, and 3+ IVF cycles, we still don't have our baby...



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