

TALKING THROUGH THE TOUGH QUESTIONS ABOUT INFERTILITY

By Dr. Alexis Davis, Medical Transformation Center

Currently, about 1 in 6 adults experience challenges with fertility, which means this is far more common than many people realize. Yet despite how common it is, fertility struggles can still feel incredibly isolating and difficult to talk about.

In my work at Medical Transformation Center, I see both male and female patients who feel discouraged, overwhelmed, and frustrated after months or even years of searching for answers. Fertility challenges can affect not only physical health, but also emotional well-being, relationships, confidence, and mental health. Many people are left trying to navigate confusing and often contradictory information while carrying a deep sense of grief and uncertainty.

Through our approach to cellular medicine, we have always helped patients understand the connection between fertility and overall wellness. Rather than looking at fertility in isolation, we focus on supporting the health of the entire body by evaluating factors such as hormone balance, inflammation, metabolism, nutrition, stress, sleep, and underlying root causes that may be affecting reproductive health.

Because of this, I recently expanded my training by obtaining a certification in fertility from the Metabolic Medical Institute. The certification focused on investigating the root causes of "unexplained infertility," which simply means an underlying cause has not been identified after a standard infertility evaluation. This diagnosis often leaves patients feeling very confused & discouraged. I have been working to integrate that training with the principles of cellular health and regenerative medicine to better support patients on their fertility journey. I believe it is important to take a more comprehensive approach that looks at overall health, hormone balance, lifestyle, nutrition, and underlying root causes rather than focusing on symptoms alone.

Below are my answers to some of the questions I am most asked in the privacy of my office. My hope is that this helps start more open conversations around fertility and reminds anyone struggling that they are not alone.



Dr. Alexis Davis is a physician at Medical Transformation Center with extensive training in cellular medicine. Born and raised in Louisville, she earned her Medical Degree and completed her family medicine residency at the University of Louisville and has recently completed training in Anti-Aging and Metabolic Medicine through the Metabolic Medical Institute, part of the American Academy of Anti-Aging Medicine.

Why is infertility becoming more common?

There are many factors that can contribute to this. We are seeing higher rates of metabolic and hormonal conditions such as PCOS (recently renamed Polycystic Ovary Syndrome or PMOS), obesity, endometriosis, thyroid dysfunction, and autoimmune disorders, all of which can impact reproductive health.

But lifestyle factors also play a significant role. Chronic stress, poor sleep, lack of movement, and nutrient deficiencies may all affect hormone balance and overall well-being. I think it is important to remember that fertility is deeply connected to overall health.

Can toxins cause infertility?

Yes, toxins can absolutely play a role in fertility challenges. Today, we are exposed to more environmental chemicals than ever before. Over time, these exposures can place additional stress on the body and may disrupt normal hormone function in both men and women.

For example, pesticides and herbicides in our food supply, synthetic fragrances and chemicals in personal care products, and compounds found in certain plastics and nonstick cookware can all affect the endocrine system. Many of these chemicals are considered endocrine disruptors, meaning they can interfere with the body's natural hormone balance. Some may mimic estrogen, while others can block or alter normal hormone signaling.

Because fertility relies on very precise hormonal communication within the body, even small disruptions can have an impact. Research has shown that certain environmental toxins may negatively affect sperm count and motility, egg quality, ovarian reserve, and overall reproductive health. Some exposures have also been associated with earlier menopause and may continue to affect fetal development during pregnancy.

This is why it is so important to focus on reducing "toxic burden" - the total accumulation of harmful substances like heavy metals, pesticides, plasticizers, and industrial pollutants stored in the body at any given time.

I know it can sound a bit overwhelming, but there are realistic, sustainable ways to do this. Simple changes such as choosing cleaner personal care products made with natural ingredients and fewer chemicals, minimizing plastic use, filtering drinking water, and prioritizing whole foods can support overall health and hormone balance over time.

How long after I stop taking birth control can I get pregnant?

The short answer is that it is possible to become pregnant in your very first cycle after stopping birth control. That said, for many women, it may take a little longer for their bodies to return to their natural rhythm.

Most hormonal contraceptives work by using synthetic forms of progesterone, sometimes combined with estrogen, to suppress ovulation. Because of this, it can take time for the body's own hormonal signaling to fully resume normal ovulatory cycles after discontinuation. For many women, this happens within a few months, although for others it can take up to a year for cycles to feed fully regular again.

It is also important to recognize that birth control can sometimes mask underlying hormonal or reproductive conditions, such as PCOS, endometriosis, or irregular cycles. These conditions may not become fully apparent until contraception is stopped, which can sometimes make it seem like fertility is delayed when there may be an underlying issue that needs to be addressed.

I think this is why it can be helpful to take a broader view of fertility as part of overall hormonal health. Supporting the body with appropriate evaluation when cycles are irregular can help create a clearer picture of reproductive health and improve the chances of a healthy conception when the time is right.

Can supplements improve fertility?

Yes, supplements can absolutely play a supportive role in fertility, but I think it is important to remember that there is not a one-size-fits-all approach. It will always come back to the correct support for each unique body. Every person has specific nutritional needs, genetics, hormone

patterns, and underlying health factors that should be considered when trying to optimize fertility.

Let me give you some examples: Folate is incredibly important for early fetal development and reducing the risk of neural tube defects. But an individual with the MTHFR gene variant will need a methylated form of folate so the body can use it more easily.

Certain supplements may also be helpful in specific situations. Inositol can be especially beneficial for women with PMOS because it may help improve insulin sensitivity, support ovulation, and regulate menstrual cycles.

Other supplements worth considering include CoQ10, a powerful antioxidant that has been studied for its potential to support egg quality and sperm health by enhancing mitochondrial function, and Omega-3 fatty acids. Omega-3s support hormone balance and are important for a baby's developing brain and nervous system.

Whenever possible, I recommend evaluating and optimizing nutrient levels in both male and female partners prior to conception. This can help identify deficiencies and ensure the body has the support it needs for healthy hormone production, ovulation, sperm health, and fetal development.

Ultimately, the most important thing to remember is that fertility is deeply connected to overall cellular health. When someone is struggling with fertility, it is important to take a comprehensive approach and examine the many factors that may be influencing hormone balance, metabolism, inflammation, nutrient status, and overall well-being for both partners.

At the same time, I always want patients to feel encouraged and hopeful. Our bodies are incredibly intelligent and resilient, and with the right support, many people can make meaningful improvements in their health and fertility. An individualized approach that focuses on identifying root causes and supporting the entire body can make a significant difference in preparing for a healthy pregnancy and long-term wellness. 