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Maybe Baby
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>> Aroma alert

If you're pregnant, you'll already be experiencing a heightened sense of smell, but did you know that some smells are better for you than others? Health practitioners are becoming increasingly cautious about the use of aromatherapy oils during pregnancy, with many advising women to steer clear of them altogether. In moderation, orange and mandarin oils are believed safe, but conventionally soothing oils like lavender can actually encourage uterine contractions, so are best avoided until labour.

female body for between four and five days. This equates to roughly a six-day conception window around the middle of your cycle. If you've been on the Pill for a number of years, you may find it takes time for your body to return to its natural menstruation cycle. Some 60 per cent of couples will conceive within three menstrual cycles after ceasing contraception, while around 85 per cent will conceive within 12 cycles.

Once you're pregnant

During the next 40 weeks your body will go through some phenomenal changes. Your blood volume will rise by about 60 per cent (increasing your need for iron-rich foods and the volume of water you drink each day), the amount of protein you need will double, while the amount of zinc, calcium and vitamin B you need to absorb from your food will also rise. You should increase your intake of omega-3 fatty acids to aid your baby's brain development.

Judy Davie, nutritionist and founder of The Food Coach consultancy, says the golden



rule is to eat as much fresh, natural produce as possible while pregnant. "Women need protein for cells to replicate, so eat plenty of organic poultry, lean red meat, eggs and fish. Avoid high-mercury fish like swordfish, ling and barramundi," Judy says.

The raw-fish rule – no smoked salmon or sushi – is in place to prevent pregnant women getting food poisoning. Also avoid any foods made from unpasteurised milk, such as imported Roquefort cheese, which has recently been allowed into Australia.

"I would suggest avoiding anything which may have been sitting out for a long time, such as buffet or club meals in heated cabinets," Judy advises. "And don't eat anything containing liver, such as pâté, because high levels of vitamin A [found in liver] can be damaging to a foetus."

>> Not there yet?

If you're trying to conceive, it's vital to know when you're at your most fertile. The **Maybe Baby** test works by magnifying the oestrogen levels in your saliva, which, during ovulation, produces a fern-like pattern in the test. This indicates when you're about to ovulate, so you can identify the most fertile time in your cycle. It's a great way to accurately increase your chances of falling pregnant. **Maybe Baby** is available from pharmacies nationwide and costs around \$79.95. For more info visit www.maybebaby.com.

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