

# Womb to world

What you should know before  
starting IVF

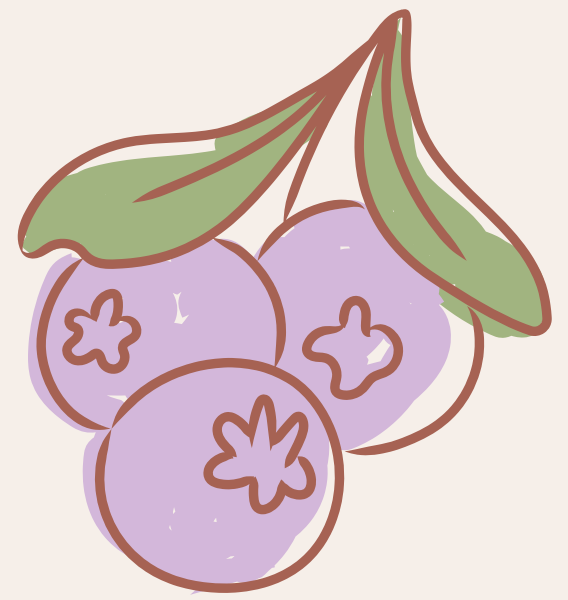
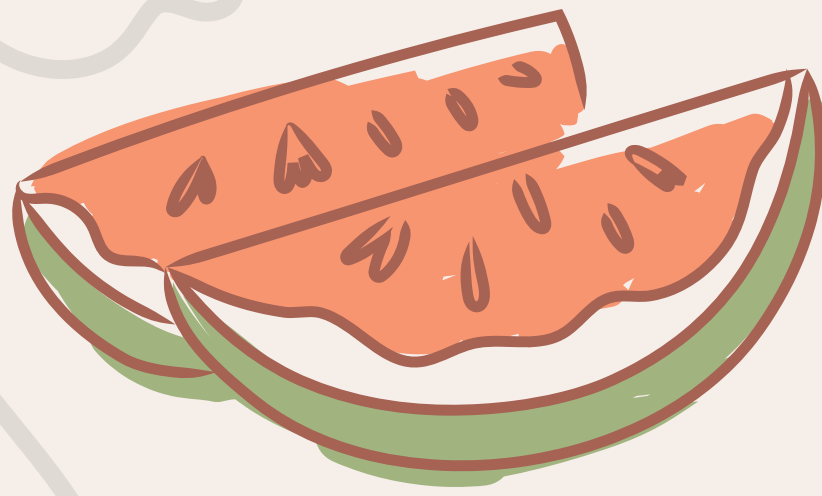
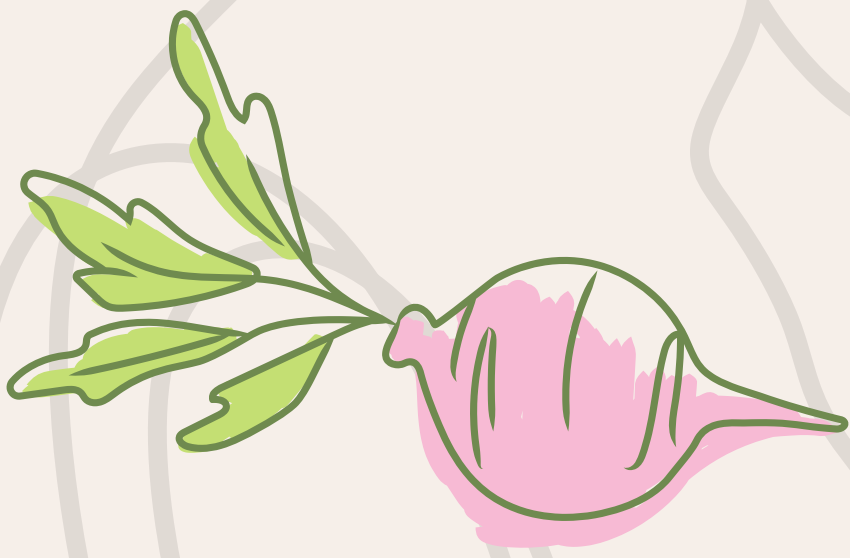
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WOMB TO WORLD  
fertility & pregnancy acupuncture & massage

# Supplementation

Not all supplements are created equal! Products marketed in pharmacies are not your friend. It is important to make sure you are getting the right preconception support prior to conceiving. It is best to speak to your practitioner about what supplements are most suitable for you.



# Nutrition

You are what you eat!

Organic foods are good for fertility. Conventional produce contains harmful herbicides and pesticides which have been shown to negatively affect both male and female fertility. Studies have also shown organic vegetables and fruits to have more nutritional value.

Drink lots of clean water. Be sure to drink at least 10 glasses of clean, purified or filtered water daily. It is best to avoid bottled water as some of the plastics in the bottle can contribute to hormonal imbalance due to their oestrogen mimicking chemicals.

The best waters to choose from are reverse osmosis and distilled. Avoid tap water, as many recent studies have shown tap water to be laced with harmful pesticides from agricultural runoff.

# Reduce your toxic load

Avoid xenoestrogens - environmental oestrogen, coming from pesticides & the plastic industry.

When you are trying to conceive, it is extremely important to avoid anything that might cause an imbalance in your hormones. The main culprits are the xenoestrogens.

One of the best ways to eliminate an excess intake of xenoestrogens is to eat organic produce during the preconception period and throughout your pregnancy.

Ensure all plastic drink bottles and containers are BPA free. Better still - use glass or ceramic instead.

Avoid using cling wraps on foods, especially when heating items up in microwaves. Avoid purchasing 'takeaway' meals in plastic containers.



# Managing stress

Add into this mix high pressure jobs, caffeine, complex family arrangements, and then an IVF to top it all off... the accumulation of both physiological and psychological stress can have profound effects on your overall health and hormonal balance.

This lifestyle is contrary to what is ideal in making space both physically and emotionally when welcoming a baby.

While I would encourage you to think about whether you can minimise some of the external stressors in your life, there will still be many you cannot eliminate, it is important to manage your response in giving your mind and body the time to decompress.

Some ideas on how to do this include:

Taking time out for yourself each day to do something with the sole purpose of your own pleasure and relaxation.

A walk on the beach, catching up with a friend, having a massage. Whether long or short periods, ensuring you take time out of each day will reduce your stress levels.

Regular meditation practice or guided relaxations. Websites like 'Be Fertile' have guided meditations specifically for the different stages of IVF.

Most benefit is gained when done regularly - aim for at least 5 times per week.

# Managing stress

Journaling – writing out your experiences can be a powerful way to integrate aspects of your journey that you find challenging. Others find that writing out each day what they are grateful for can help see the positives, even in the most stressful of times.

Seeing a counsellor or psychologist - there are psychologists and counsellors that specialise in reproductive health and fertility. They can help you manage some of the emotions and challenges that can come up on an IVF journey.

Yoga, walking, or gentle to moderate exercise 3 to 4 times per week can help alleviate stress and keep you fit and healthy.

Regular acupuncture helps to modulate stress hormones and engage the parasympathetic nervous system



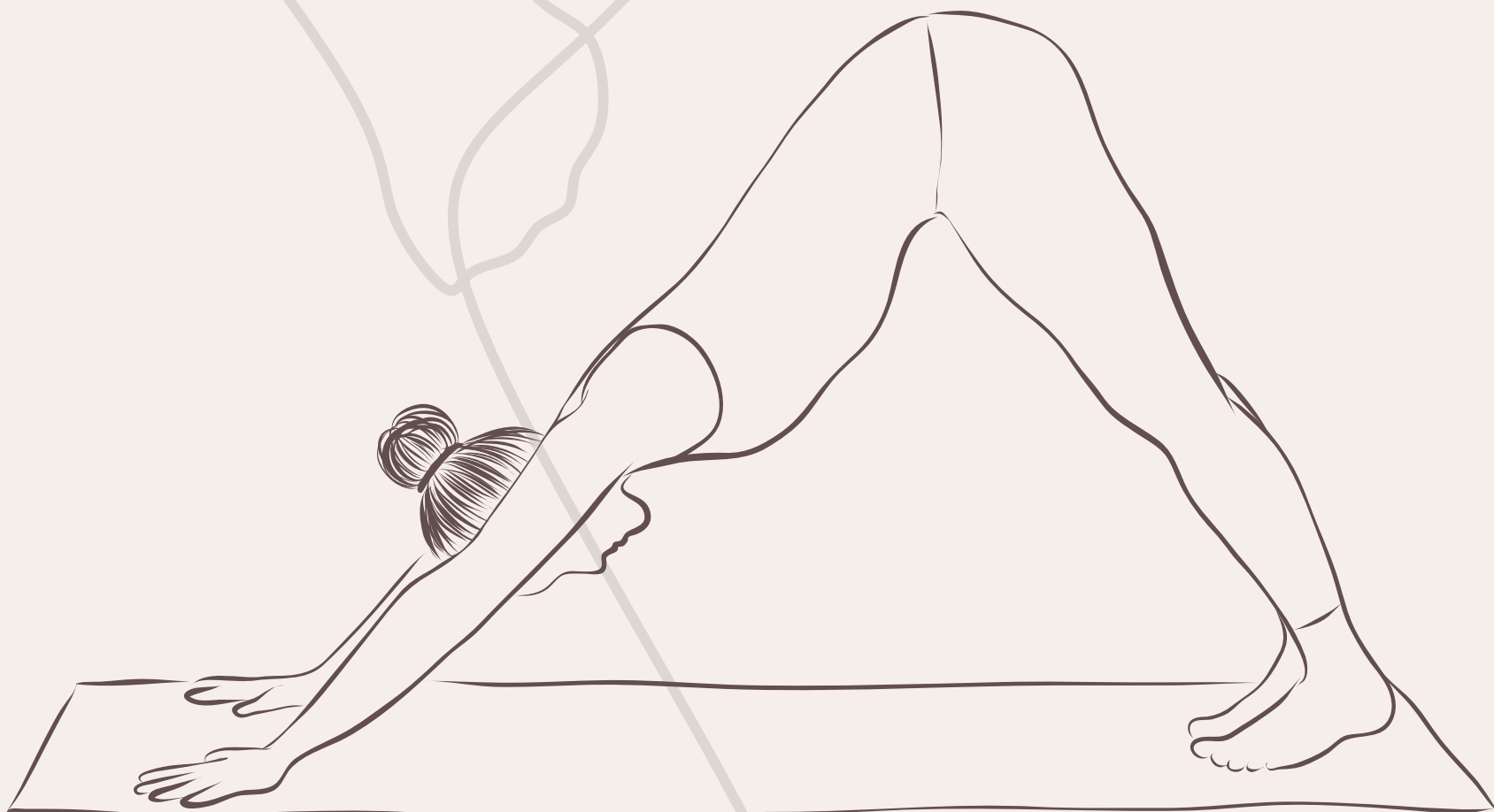
# Tips & tricks to help manage your stress

1. Identify the source/s of your stress

2. Recognise how you deal with stress and ask yourself if how you deal with it is unhealthy ie. smoking, drinking, withdrawing or lashing out

3. Learn how to manage your stress by using some of the tips below:

- Avoid unnecessary stress
- Alter the situation if able
- Adapt to the stressor
- Accept the situation if you can't change it
- Make the time for fun and relaxation



*always be gentle with  
yourself*

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