

Understanding Fertility Problems: Keeping a Positive Attitude



Dealing with fertility problems can be exhausting. But if you feel discouraged or depressed, remember that you're not alone. Keep sharing your feelings with your partner. Take advantage of help from your healthcare provider, family, or support groups. And remember that no matter what happens, you and your partner can still look forward to a rewarding life together.

Getting support

If your stress and anxiety feel overwhelming, it often helps to share your feelings with someone. This could be your partner, a family member, or a friend. It could also be your healthcare provider, a therapist, or a clergy member. Another option is to ask your provider about joining a support group for couples dealing with fertility problems. Being in a support group can help keep you from feeling alone. You can also learn from the experiences of others.

Coping with your feelings

Trying to cope with fertility problems is a challenge you probably never expected. So it's natural to find yourself having strong feelings at times. You may feel guilty, angry, or sad. You might start to resent other couples with children. Or you may simply be tired of having to schedule sex. Recognize that these feelings are not only common, they're completely normal. Just don't let them take over your life. Keep things in perspective. And don't be afraid to ask for support if you need it.

Dealing with social situations

Over time, it's likely that some people may unintentionally offend you with comments or questions. This can be upsetting. But just remember that they likely have no idea what it feels like to be in your shoes. It may help to explain your situation. But if you don't want to talk about it, you don't have to. If nothing else, tactfully changing the subject can help ease the situation.

Nurturing your relationship

Fertility problems can strain even the best relationships. That's why supporting each other now is more important than ever. Be careful not to assign blame or lash out in anger. Instead, listen to each other. Share your feelings. And make time for intimacy and romance. Even little things like a day trip or a weekend away can help ease your stress.

Thinking things over

If you've been through a long period of treatment, consider taking a break to think things over. Just a month off can help ease some of the pressure you may be feeling. You might also use this time to reassess your goals or agree on a date to stop treatment. Deciding on a time to stop can be very hard. But many couples find that setting a deadline helps them regain a sense of control. It can also give you a fresh outlook on other options.

Looking at other options

It's OK to decide to stop treatment. You and your partner still have options. One is to plan for a life together without children. This may seem strange at first. But not having children can still lead to a satisfying life in ways you may not have expected. If you still want children, adoption is a gratifying and enriching choice for many couples. Ask your healthcare provider for information about adoption agencies. Talk to other parents who've adopted. And if adoption isn't for you, you may want to think about getting involved with organizations like Big Brothers/Big Sisters.

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