

WHAT TO WATCH OUT FOR > Compiled by Rachel Hosie

Obese men have more sperm defects

Women are often given advice on how to change their lifestyles to improve their chances of getting pregnant, but less focus is placed on men.

According to a new study, however, men's health could have a greater effect on a couple's chances of conceiving than previously thought.

Researchers have found that obesity may adversely affect sperm quality.

The report, published in the journal *Andologia*, is the first study into abnormal sperm parameters in obese men.

The research was based on computer-aided sperm analysis, and the findings suggest that clinicians may

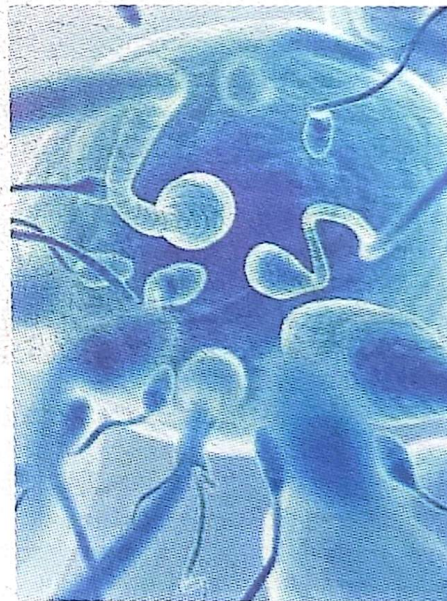
need to factor in paternal obesity prior to assisted reproduction.

To reach their conclusions, researchers assessed 1,285 men.

They found that being obese was associated with lower volume of semen, sperm count, concentration and motility, as well as greater sperm defects.

"The health and reproductive performance of spermatozoa in obese men are more likely to be compromised both qualitatively and quantitatively," said Dr. Gottumukkala Ramaraju, lead author of the study.

"Results from our present dataset suggest that efforts focusing on male weight loss before conception are



warranted for couples seeking infertility treatment."

Previous studies have shown that being significantly overweight can adversely affect a woman's fertility because it disrupts the delicate balance of hormones that influence ovulation and fertilisation.

What's more, overweight women have a higher incidence of menstrual dysfunction and anovulation (when the ovaries do not release an oocyte during a menstrual cycle. Therefore, ovulation does not take place).

So if you and your partner are trying to get pregnant, it could be worth swapping out fries for veggies from time to time.

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