



Thyroid & Fertility

Do TSH levels impact your ability to conceive?

The answer is 'yes'. Thyroid health plays a crucial yet often overlooked role in fertility. This is because the thyroid gland regulates metabolism through hormones, primarily thyroxine (T4) and triiodothyronine (T3), which influence nearly every organ system, including the reproductive system. The most reliable way to assess thyroid function is thyroid-stimulating hormone (TSH), produced by the pituitary gland.

The co-relation between TSH and Fertility

TSH levels help determine whether the thyroid is underactive (hypothyroidism) or overactive (hyperthyroidism). For women trying to conceive, maintaining an optimal TSH range is essential. Even mildly abnormal levels can disrupt ovulation and menstrual cycles.

In hypothyroidism, elevated TSH levels indicate that the thyroid is not producing enough hormones. This can lead to irregular periods, anovulation (lack of ovulation) and difficulty in implantation. It also increases the risk of miscarriage. Conversely, low TSH levels in hyperthyroidism can cause hormonal imbalances, affecting egg quality and menstrual regularity.

What are the ideal TSH levels?

While normal TSH levels for the general population typically range between 0.4 and 4.0 mIU/L, experts recommend a narrower range, usually between 1.0 and 2.5 mIU/L, for women trying to conceive or in

early pregnancy. Keeping TSH within this optimal window improves the chances of ovulation and supports early foetal development.

Impact on Male Fertility

It is crucial to remember that thyroid dysfunction is not limited to women. In men, abnormal thyroid hormone levels can affect sperm production, motility and overall semen quality. Both hypothyroidism and hyperthyroidism may contribute to reduced fertility.

Diagnosis and Management

A simple blood test is all that's required to measure TSH, T3 and T4 levels. If abnormalities are detected, treatment is usually straightforward.

Hypothyroidism is commonly managed with levothyroxine, while hyperthyroidism may require medications, radioactive iodine therapy or other interventions depending on severity.

Lifestyle factors such as stress management, adequate iodine intake and regular health check-ups have an important role to play. Women with thyroid disorders need to consult their healthcare provider before conception to optimise hormone levels.

Fast track your fertility

As is evident now, thyroid balance is a vital yet manageable factor in fertility. Monitoring and maintaining appropriate TSH levels can significantly improve the chances of conception and a healthy pregnancy. Early screening and timely treatment are key.