

Pregnancy (infertility), childbirth and systems

## What is Infertility?

Infertility is defined as the inability to conceive after a certain period of time (generally one year) of trying, despite wanting to become pregnant. It is estimated that about 80% of couples will conceive within one year, and 90% within two years.



Sometimes infertility has no cause.

It is said that about 1 in 4.4 couples have undergone infertility testing or treatment.



## Causes of infertility in men

### Spermatogenesis dysfunction

Low or no sperm count.  
Poor mobility and other characteristics.  
Even if there is no particular reason, sperm  
Sometimes it may not be made.

### Sperm duct obstruction

Epididymitis, etc.  
Even if sperm are produced, they cannot pass through, and no sperm are found in the semen.

### Sexual dysfunction

Stress and mental pressure.  
Illnesses such as diabetes.

## Causes of infertility in women

### Fallopian tube and uterine abnormalities

Uterine fibroids and congenital morphological abnormalities.  
Chlamydia infection can cause blockage of the fallopian tubes without any symptoms.

Lack of cervical mucus  
Immune response to sperm, etc.

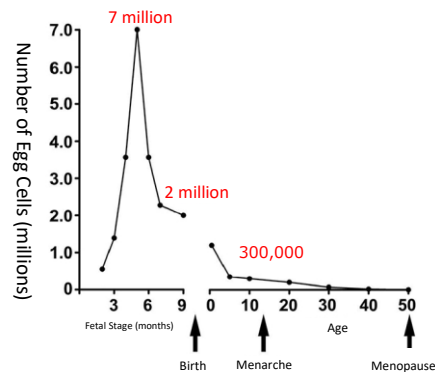
### Ovulation factors

Diseases that make it difficult to ovulate.  
Excessive dieting and extreme stress.  
Even if there is bleeding like menstruation, it may not be accompanied by ovulation.



## Effects of aging

It is known that fertility, the ability to conceive and carry a pregnancy forward, decreases with age in both men and women.



A woman's eggs are made before she is born, and they are never replenished.

Men also experience a gradual decline in sperm quality from around the age of 35.

© The definition of infertility is just a guideline. Even if it is within one year, if you feel that "it may be difficult to get pregnant", we recommend testing at the hospital.



## Recurrent pregnancy loss (RPL)

This refers to the condition of experiencing two or more miscarriages or stillbirths after becoming pregnant. There are still many unknowns, and even with testing, the cause often cannot be identified.

Although not exactly known, it is thought that tens of thousands of people suffer from RPL every year.

It is important to expand opportunities for people who experience repeated miscarriages to receive mental health care, as well as opportunities to connect with others who have experienced RPL.

## Q. If I undergo fertility treatment, will I definitely be able to get pregnant?

A. Unfortunately, not all couples are able to conceive and give birth. There are cases where pregnancy is not achieved even with advanced treatments.

## Q. If I undergo fertility treatment, will I definitely be able to get pregnant?

A. In men, it is said that smokers have lower sperm counts and motility. Smoking in women reduces egg quality, and continuing to smoke after pregnancy can lead to low birth weight babies. Excessive alcohol consumption is also thought to be related to infertility to some extent.

## Q: What types of infertility treatments are available?

A. There are general fertility treatments such as timed intercourse and artificial insemination, and advanced reproductive technologies such as in vitro fertilization and intracytoplasmic sperm injection. Some treatments are not covered by insurance, but may be subsidized by the government or local municipalities.

## Q.Where can I receive infertility treatment?

A. You can receive treatment at specialized fertility hospitals and clinics, infertility departments of obstetrics and gynecology clinics, and infertility departments of university and general hospitals.

## Q.Where can I get male infertility tests?

A. Testing can be done at the same medical institutions as women, or at urology departments that handle male infertility.

We had a hard time finding a hospital that was right for us.



I've learned that it's important not to struggle alone, but to support each other as a couple and move forward together.

Pregnancy and childbirth support that companies can offer



Early pregnancy: 4 to 15 weeks

Various changes occur within the body, and your physical condition begins to change rapidly.

**Symptoms:** Morning sickness, abdominal bloating, lower back pain, frequent urination, constipation, etc.

**Company Obligations:**

**Finding time to attend prenatal checkups**

( Article 12 of the Equal Employment Opportunity Law )

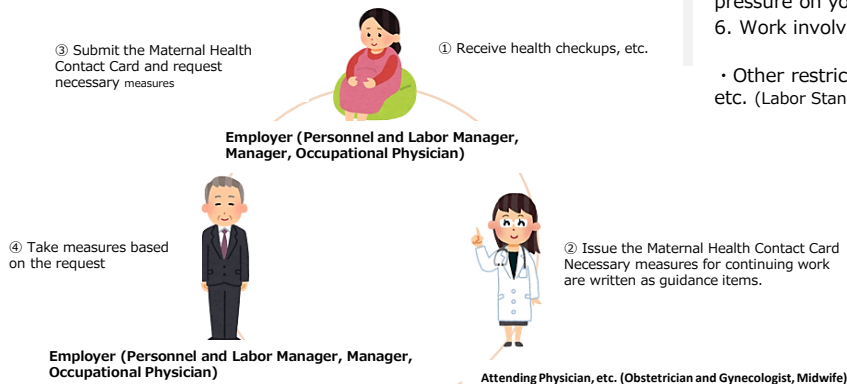
\* Whether this is paid or unpaid depends on the company.

Please consider the combined time of the following:

- Health checkup times
- Time spent receiving direct health guidance
- Time to and from medical facilities

**Maternal Health Management Guidance Contact Card**

This card is used to ensure that the guidance given by doctors, etc. to pregnant and postpartum workers is accurately communicated to their employers.



Mid to late pregnancy

The morning sickness subsides and the stable period begins. As the baby grows, the abdomen swells, and the physical burden reaches its peak. It swells and the strain on the body reaches its peak.

**Symptoms:** Anemia, swelling of the hands, feet and face, palpitations, shortness of breath, heartburn, Pain in the back or waist, leg cramps, difficulty seeing your feet, etc.

**Company Obligations:**

**Measures to enable patients to follow doctor's instructions**

(13 of the Equal Employment Opportunity Law )

<Easing commuting>

Staggered work hours, shortened working hours, changing to less congested routes, etc.

<Break>

• Extending the time • Increasing the number of times • Changing the time slot • Adjusting the environment

<Work restrictions>

\* For female workers who are pregnant and who have not yet passed one year since giving birth.

1. Heavy lifting: Continuous work of 6-8 kg or more / Intermittent work of 10 kg or more
2. Continuous walking such as for field work
3. Work that requires constant whole-body movement
4. Work that frequently involves going up and down stairs
5. Work that forces you into an unnatural position, such as by putting pressure on your abdomen
6. Work involving vibration of the whole body, etc.

• Other restrictions on dangerous and harmful work, late-night work, etc. (Labor Standards Act)

Before and after childbirth

**Pre-Birth Leave** (Article 65 of the Labor Standards Act)

You can take leave starting from 6 weeks before the expected delivery date (14 weeks in the case of twins or more) if you request it.

**Post-Birth Leave** ( Article 65 of the Labor Standards Act )

You cannot work for 8 weeks from the day following delivery. However, after 6 weeks from delivery, you can work if you request it and a doctor approves.

**Dismissal is prohibited during the pre-birth and post-birth leave period and for 30 days thereafter.**

\* "Delivery" for the purpose of post-birth leave includes childbirth after 4 months of pregnancy, stillbirth, and miscarriage.



**Q. My expected delivery date has been extended. Can I take leave for longer than the 6-week pre-birth leave period?**

A. If delivery occurs later than the expected date, the period from the expected date to the actual date of delivery is included in the pre-birth leave. Even if the pre-birth leave is extended, the 8 weeks after delivery are secured as "post-birth leave."



It's about creating an environment where everyone can balance work and family, and choose a working style according to the worker's wishes and circumstances.

**Partial Amendments to Child Care Leave (Child Care and Family Care Leave Act) - Phased Implementation from April 1, 2025**



[1] Mandatory measures to achieve flexible working styles (From October 1st)

\*The employer selects two or more measures from options such as changes in start times, teleworking, reduced working hours, and granting new leave.

[2] Expansion of overtime exemption eligibility

Changes from "workers raising children under 3 years old" to "workers raising children before elementary school enrollment."

[3] Mandatory effort to introduce teleworking

Creating an environment where workers raising children under 3 years old can choose teleworking.

[4] Review of leave for childcare/nursing

"School closures due to infectious diseases, etc." and "kindergarten/school entrance and graduation ceremonies" are added as reasons for taking leave. The age range of eligible children is extended to "up to the end of third grade of elementary school." Workers "with less than 6 months of service," who are excluded under the current system, will also be eligible.

There is a consultation service for creating a female-friendly workplace! <https://www.bosei-navi.mhlw.go.jp/advice/>  
Specialists such as doctors and social insurance labor consultants will answer your questions about maternal health management via email.