



Home Fertility Tests: Don't Believe All the Hype

Home fertility tests. You can pick them up in your local drug store and if you follow the directions, you'll be told when you're most likely to be able to conceive based on your cycle. What could be simpler? Like over-the-counter pregnancy tests, they can give you all the information you need to know how to maximize your fertility. *Right?*

Unfortunately, the reality isn't so cut and dry for most couples who have been unsuccessful in their attempts to conceive. Regardless of what home fertility test advertisers would have consumers believe, the kits may simply be a waste of a couple's discretionary dollars.

As physicians who specialize in reproductive health will tell you, infertility isn't a one-size-fits-all concern. What helps one woman (or couple) conceive might do nothing for another. Therein lies a significant problem with at-home fertility kits.

Home-based fertility kits measure only one area involved in fertility — ovulation. This means they cannot provide the necessary personalization women dealing with fertility problems deserve. After all, home fertility tests have been designed with an "average" consumer in mind who simply needs to understand when she's ovulating in order to conceive ... and that certainly doesn't describe every infertile individual's condition.

For instance, home fertility tests cannot test for other factors involved in infertility, such as endometriosis, STDs, genetic disorders or male infertility. And if any of those factors is the reason for the fertility issue, the fertility kit will do nothing except waste a couple's time and resources.

This isn't to say that you can't try a home fertility test, especially if you have never tried to become pregnant before. But if you haven't been able to naturally conceive within 6-12 months after ceasing all birth control methods, it's a good idea to shift gears and head to a fertility specialist for a one-on-one examination. That way, you can rule out any other causes of infertility.