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The Truth About 8 Baby-Making Myths

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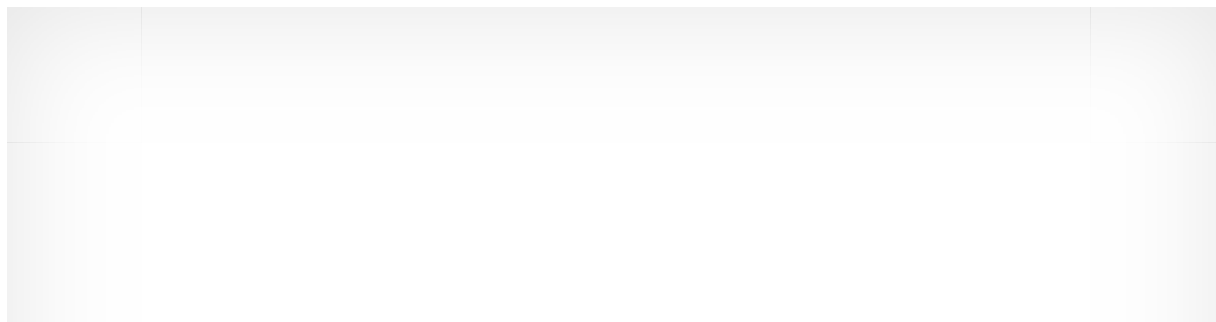
Simone Becchetti | Stocksy



By Judy Koutsky

Are certain positions more likely to result in conception? Do older moms have a greater chance of conceiving twins? If you already have a boy, are you more likely to conceive a girl the next time around? We talked to [Dr. Kristi Angevine](#), MD, FACOG, a board certified OB-GYN practicing medicine in Chattanooga, Tennessee, about the reality of conception. Test your knowledge to see which of the below statements are true...and which are folklore:

1. Missionary position is more likely to result in conception.



False. Even though it seems like certain positions would get sperm closer to the cervix, uterus and egg, they all can be equally effective. "Position is completely irrelevant," says Dr. Angevine. (Though she says there are *rare* cases where a woman's vaginal and uterine anatomy are unusual enough that gravity can negatively impact the sperm's ability to get to the egg.)

2. A woman's egg is more likely to be fertilized if she raises her legs/hips immediately after intercourse.

False. Sperm are fast...and they're programmed to find that egg! They're automatically drawn toward it, says Dr. Angevine. Some women swear that propping their hips and glutes on a pillow and raising their legs high in the air immediately after sex resulted in getting pregnant on their first try. The reality: They [had sex at the right time](#).

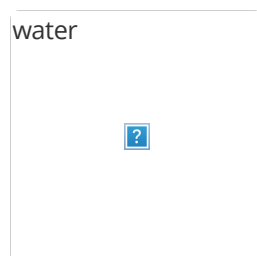
3. Older moms are more likely to conceive twins.

True. There really is [a statistically higher percentage of multiple births in older moms](#), says Dr. Angevine — and it's not just because of assisted reproductive technology (IVF and fertility-enhancing medications).

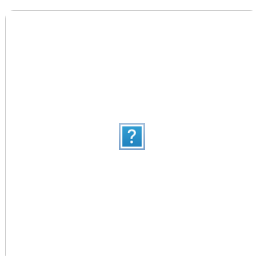
4. Wearing boxers or briefs has no bearing on a man's sperm count.

True. As long as underwear is not excessively tight, science has not shown it to effect sperm count. Pelvic trauma and prolonged positions of perineal pressure (road biking long distances, for example) are the main [activities that can reduce sperm count](#), notes Dr. Angevine.

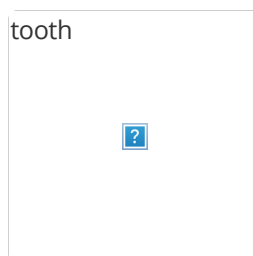
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5. The chance of miscarriage decreases the further along you are in your pregnancy.

True. "There is a high rate of [miscarriage](#) when sperm and egg first meet; it may range from 30 to 75 percent," says Dr. Angevine. However, because this happens so early on, [most women don't even know they conceived](#). As the pregnancy progresses, the miscarriage rate drops dramatically: By 10 weeks of pregnancy, one in 10 women miscarries...which means nine out of 10 are still pregnant.

6. If you have a boy, you're next child is more likely to be a girl.

False: While everyone seems to have an opinion on how baby's sex and birth order are related — and many more [theories about predicting baby's gender](#) once you have conceived — Dr. Angevine stresses that each conception is the same: you have a 50 percent chance of having a boy, and a 50 percent chance of having a girl.

7. You can determine the outcome of baby's sex by having intercourse at a specific time of the month.

False. This is another theory that science just hasn't proved. If you have sex earlier in your ovulation cycle, the thinking goes, you're more likely to have a girl. Not true. "No time in the menstrual and ovulation cycle has a higher chance of one gender over the other," says Dr. Angevine.

8. Having sex too frequently actually reduces your chance of conceiving.

False. The myth that men should "store up their sperm" simply isn't true, says Dr. Angevine. While the actual number of sperm may decrease with frequent (i.e., multiple times per day) intercourse, all that matters is that some sperm are present during ovulation — and sperm can actually live inside a woman's body [for up to five days](#), by some estimates. In fact, pregnancy rates *increase* the more you have sex when you're ovulating, says Dr. Angevine. So get busy!

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From the What to Expect editorial team and [Heidi Murkoff](#), author of *What to Expect Before You're Expecting*. Health information on this site is based on peer-reviewed medical journals and highly respected health organizations and institutions including [ACOG](#) (American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists), [CDC](#) (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention) and [AAP](#) (American Academy of Pediatrics), as well as the *What to Expect* books by Heidi Murkoff.

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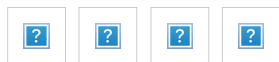
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