

STARTING A FAMILY > TRYING TO CONCEIVE

Some People Are Using Menstrual Cups to Get Pregnant Faster and It Just Might Work

Some parents have been using menstrual cups as they TTC—and swear the strategy may have helped them get pregnant faster.

By [Maressa Brown](#) | Updated on August 9, 2022



THE TTC (TRYING TO CONCEIVE) ONLINE COMMUNITY IS ENTHUSIASTIC ABOUT THE LOW-COST, LOW-RISK METHOD.

When you've decided it's time to make a baby, you and your partner may be open to trying a variety of strategies, whether they're from medical literature or old wives' tales. Sure, you've probably heard about putting your legs up in the air or maybe even [eating the right foods](#) when you're trying to get pregnant, but one of the trendiest TTC tricks right now may very well be using a menstrual cup, or more specifically, the SoftCup.

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The device is best known as an eco-friendly, reusable alternative to tampons, but through word of mouth and the internet, some innovative couples have begun buzzing about using the cups to

innovative couples have begun buzzing about using the cups to conceive.

Sherry Ross, M.D., an ob-gyn, women's health expert, and author of *She-ology: The Definitive Guide to Women's Intimate Health. Period.*, attests to the fact that many couples who are trying to get pregnant faster or want to avoid laying out cash for expensive fertility treatments are using menstrual cups as part of their TTC plan in a few different ways.

"Having sex and having your partner 'pull out' to deposit sperm into a menstrual cup is one method," Dr. Ross says. "Others have penile-vaginal sex and immediately insert a menstrual cup into the vagina to ensure the sperm stays in place, close to the entrance of the uterus." Couples who are using artificial insemination can also use the method, Dr. Ross notes. It's an interesting concept and if you're interested in hearing more, read on for some facts about this menstrual cup method.



PHOTO: DAVID PEREIRAS/SHUTTERSTOCK

Can a menstrual cup really help you get pregnant?

The device could definitely support your efforts to conceive, according to Dr. Ross. "In every ejaculate, there are millions of sperm swimming around," she notes. "A menstrual cup full of sperm allows the sperm to only move in only one direction and that is towards the egg. The cervical mucus associated with ovulation helps the sperm swim up through the cervix and uterus ultimately making its way into the fallopian tube where the egg is fertilized. It only takes one sperm to penetrate the egg to allow fertilization to occur. Once the egg is fertilized, cells continue to divide creating an embryo which eventually travels into the uterus where implantation occurs."

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Dr. Ross also points out that keeping sperm close to the cervix and entrance of the uterus for an extended period of time could raise your chances of conception.

"Healthy sperm lives for three days," Dr. Ross explains. "The longer the sperm hangs out at the cervix and the entrance to the uterus, the better chance it has at swimming up into the fallopian tube to fertilize the egg. Since there are no real guidelines to using a menstrual cup to help keep in sperm at the cervix, I would suggest leaving the cup in place as long as you safely can." She advises following the general guidelines for menstrual cup wear, which is no more than 12 hours.

According to [Daniel A. Skora, M.D.](#), an ob-gyn, reproductive endocrinologist, and infertility specialist with Fertility Specialists of Texas, says that keeping the cup in beyond that period of time could "alter the vaginal pH, which can lead to yeast infections and bacterial vaginosis (BV)."

Some parents say menstrual cups helped them get pregnant faster.

Julia Dennison, 36, a mom from Sunnyside, New York, shares that she had been using the Mooncup (the U.K. version of the DivaCup) ever since she realized the cost-saving device would mean never having to buy another tampon. So, she already had one handy when she was trying to get pregnant. "I was trying to conceive my now daughter for 9 months, so was ready to try any trick that would give me a boost whenever I was ovulating," Dennison says. "I read somewhere about people using Softcups to keep the sperm closer to your cervix after sex, and I had one anyway, so I thought why not?"

Dennison says it was easy as putting one in after sex the same way she would when she got her period, keeping it in for a few hours. "And the first month I tried it, I got pregnant!" she shares. "It might just have been a coincidence, but I like to think it helped. I'd definitely do it again if I were trying again."

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Dennison's story is one echoed by other mothers who found success with the method. Karly McBride, 36, from Springfield, Virginia, shares that she and her husband were struggling with [male factor infertility](#), so she was active in the TTC online community.

"I believe I was on the message boards of one of my period/fertility

tracking apps when I heard other women saying menstrual cups helped them," McBride says. "I figured it was worth a try and bought some SoftCups at the drug store. Most women said they kept one by their bed and inserted it immediately after sex. I would always forget so I'd quickly go to the bathroom and get one afterward. I can never say for sure if it was what helped me get pregnant after a year of trying, but I do believe it did."

She recommends that others consider the method, but experiment with it first, as menstrual cups can be a little tricky to insert if you've never used one before. (To insert the cup, you press the sides of the cup together and then in half again to form a "U" shape. Then, hold the folded sides together in place between your thumb and forefinger, with the curved edge facing away from your palm. Next, you insert like you would a tampon, pushing the curved edge of the folded cup horizontally into the vaginal opening. Finally, grip the base of the cup and turn it a full rotation in either direction. When it rotates fully, you know that it is fully open and positioned properly.)

"It's a very small investment in comparison to fertility treatments," McBride adds. "It won't work for everyone, but as low-cost as it is, it's worth a shot!"

Meggan Hunt, 41, from Sparta, New Jersey, was similarly active in the TTC online community following a pregnancy loss. "I am in a pregnancy loss and TTC after loss group, and these women were talking about using a cup," she shares. "Out of desperation the month before I was ready to begin IVF, I used SoftCups right after we had sex, then put my feet up and left it in for at least a few hours. At my next IVF appointment, they did a baseline ultrasound and bam! I was pregnant."

Are menstrual cups worth trying while TTC?

Though it may not be a conventional conception strategy or one that has research backing it just yet, a menstrual cup could be a method worth investigating and discussing with your health care provider when you're trying to get pregnant. Though some people's experiences may simply be coincidental, it's also possible that the cup did help their cause. But remember, if you're having trouble conceiving, or have questions about starting a family, a good place to start is always by talking to your doctor.

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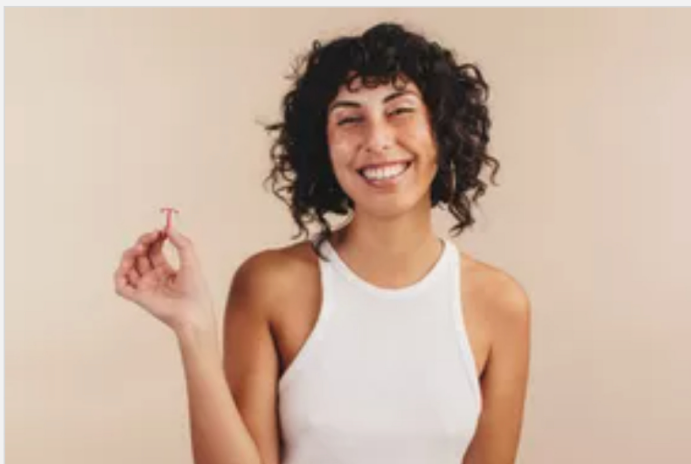
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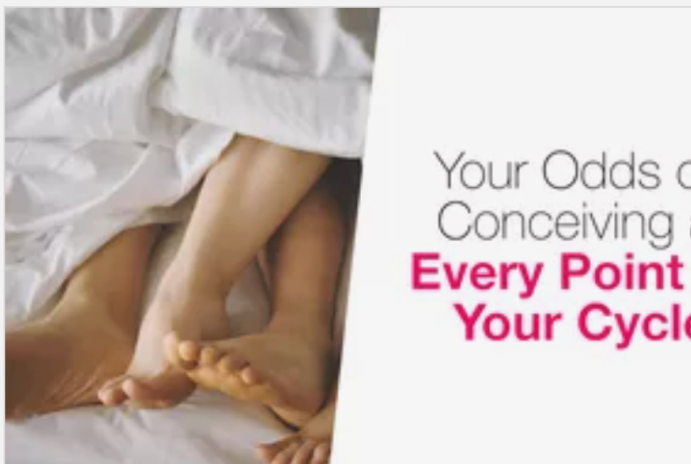
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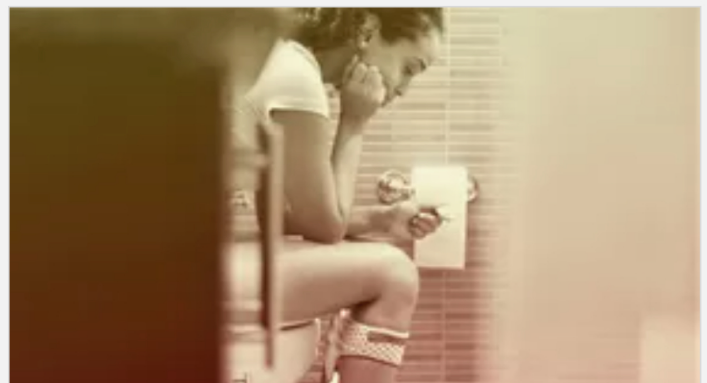
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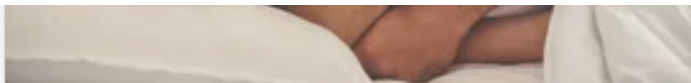


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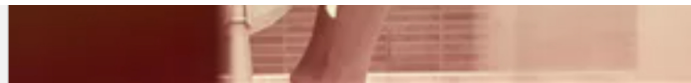




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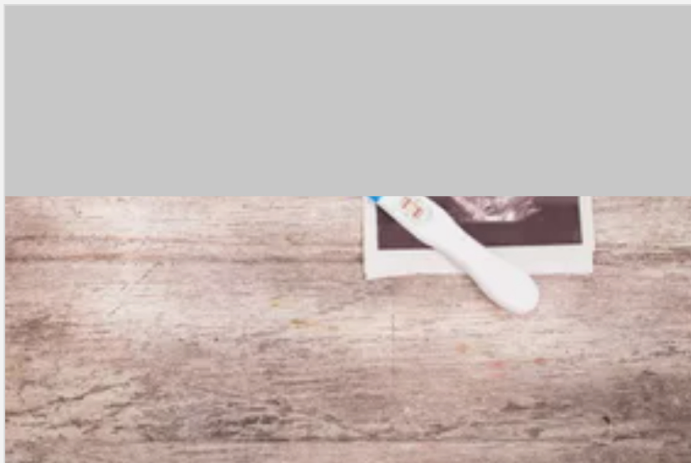
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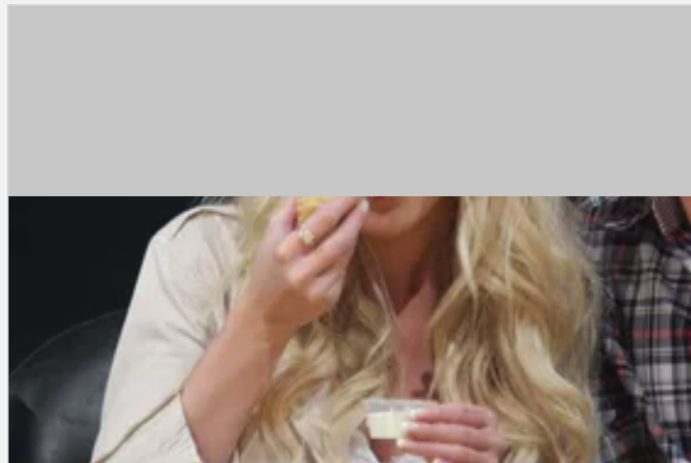
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