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DO YOU REALLY NEED TO SPEND £4,000+ ON A BABY?

Zita West, author of **Fertility & Conception** published today, claims that many couples desperate for a baby may be trying IVF unnecessarily. In some cases, clinics are not even doing basic fertility awareness checks to pick up on the more easily treatable reasons for couples' lack of fertility.

Fertility levels in the UK are at their lowest since records began in 1924, with:

- one in six couples experiencing some kind of fertility problem
- one in four couples taking more than six months to conceive
- one in five men infertile and 43% of British males experiencing fertility problems

and is becoming an increasingly common and worrying issue for many couples.

Zita, an acupuncturist, nutritionist and midwife with her own Harley Street fertility practice which boasts celebrity clients including Kate Winslet, Cate Blanchett and Sophie Wessex, asks couples attending her clinic to fill out a detailed lifestyle questionnaire which immediately picks up on the effects of diet, hormonal imbalances or negative influences such as smoking, alcohol and environmental hazards.

"When planning a pregnancy, the first thing you need to do is to have sex. Sounds simple, but most couples are unaware of the woman's cycle and when she is at her most fertile. They are not having sex at the right time, or often enough. There are also many lifestyle factors which have an impact on fertility. Too many couples are running down the IVF route before the basics are sorted" says Zita.

The book covers everything from these basic lifestyle checks to other fertility suppressants, such as caffeine, alcohol and aluminium which are well-documented, and others that are less well-known.

For example, aspartame is the key ingredient of most artificial sweeteners and found in most foods that are labelled "diet" or "sugar-free", but it can have an adverse effect on sperm. When the temperature of aspartame exceeds 30, which it does once it is ingested, the wood alcohol in it converts to formaldehyde (a poison used to preserve body parts) and then to formic acid, which is highly toxic.

"I'll have a number 22 and reduced fertility please..." MSG (Monosodium Glutamate), a common flavour enhancer found in Chinese takeaway food has been found to reduce fertility levels in animals. In one study male rats fed MSG before mating had less than a 50% success rate (5 of 13 animals), whereas male rats not fed MSG had over a 92% success rate (12 of 13 animals). *

Zita's advice has helped thousands of woman to conceive and go on to have healthy pregnancies and babies. This book makes her knowledge accessible to all, and gives renewed hope to many childless couples.

**For further information or to set up an interview with Zita West, please contact
Serena Stent tel: 020 7010 3553 or by email, serena.stent@dk.com**

* (source: Drs. William J. Pizzi, June E. Barnhart, et. al, Department of Psychology, Northeastern Illinois University, Chicago, Illinois, *Neurobehavioral Toxicology* Vol. 2: 1-4, 1979)

ZITA WEST

Zita West is an acupuncturist, nutritionist and midwife with her own Harley Street fertility practice. As a practising acupuncturist and nutritionist, she pioneered the opening of the Acupuncture Clinic at Warwick Hospital. She has developed Zita West products, a comprehensive programme of nutritional and therapeutic products to support couples through conception, pregnancy and recovery. Her clients include Cate Blanchett, Kate Winslet and Sophie Wessex.

Zita has a firm belief in holistic principles and is a highly regarded authority on pregnancy and birth. She has been midwifery expert on *GMTV*, *Open House* and *This Morning* and currently writes a column for *Prima Baby* magazine. She also writes a column for Tommy's Campaign and for Wellbeing, a research charity which promotes good health for women and babies.

"Zita is often called a fertility and pregnancy guru, and I'm definitely one of her followers. The guidance and support she has given me through both my pregnancies has helped me to stay healthy and positive and to relax and enjoy the whole experience - at least most of the time! If you would like some advice on anything to do with having a baby, Zita would be the first person I would recommend you turn to."

Kate Winslet