



## Activity: 9-10.2.1

### Key Messages

- Optimum fertility has a limited lifespan, particularly for women. This may be important in planning a future family.
- Pregnancy can still occur, even when the chance seems low.

### Activity Details

#### Victorian Curriculum

**Health & PE** Evaluate health information from a range of sources and apply to health decisions and situations  
VCHPEP148

**Time** 20 minutes

**Levels** 9 & 10

**Equipment** • whiteboard and markers

# Fertility facts

## Purpose

To develop an awareness of infertility and its causes.

## Teaching notes

This session highlights that optimum fertility has a limited lifespan, particularly for women.

## Procedure

1. Draw a horizontal line across the board and label the start, middle and end of the line as per the following: very fertile, sub fertile, infertile.
2. Read out the brief 'cases' listed below and ask students to suggest where, on the fertility continuum, to put the person mentioned in each 'case'.
  - Jodie has not started her periods yet.
  - Michael is 17, sexually mature and very healthy.
  - Zoe is married to Stephen. They have not used contraception for a year and want to have a baby. No pregnancy has occurred.
  - Daniel has had a vasectomy.
  - Anna is 16 years old, sexually mature and healthy.
  - Chen is 45 years old and her husband Keith is 60.
  - Emma is 35 years old and her partner, Jack, is 40.
  - Naomi is 28 years old and has been sexually active for 10 years. She has been diagnosed with, and treated for, Chlamydia four times. Naomi doesn't have regular STI checks.
3. Once all names have been placed on the continuum, pose the following question to students:
  - How do we know whether we are fertile? Discuss.
  - How would fertility affect a person's health and wellbeing?
  - What factors put people at risk of infertility? (E.g. age, tobacco use, obesity, alcohol and drug use, excessive exercise). Which of these factors do we have some control over?

*Please note: There is no way of knowing someone is fertile unless special diagnostic medical tests are undertaken or a pregnancy occurs. Pregnancy depends on the combined fertility of both the man and the woman. Pregnancy can still occur, even when the chance is low, such as in Jodie and Chen's cases, and contraception should be used if a pregnancy is not wanted.*

