

13 Natural Treatments for Blocked Fallopian Tubes

by Iva Keene MRMed. ND. - Qualified Naturopathic Physician - Wednesday, March 10, 2010

<https://natural-fertility-prescription.com/13-natural-treatments-blocked-fallopian-tubes/>

Blocked Fallopian tubes are responsible for **25% to 30% of cases of female infertility**^[1]. This *silent condition* usually isn't discovered until you try to conceive. Since the fallopian tubes serve as the path for the egg to reach the uterus for implantation, any blockage in these tubes can prevent implantation and hence make it difficult for you to conceive. Blocked Fallopian tubes also increase your risk of an **ectopic pregnancy** because the fertilized egg can't travel to the uterus. In the case of an ectopic pregnancy, the fertilized egg implants in the Fallopian tube or elsewhere in the abdominal cavity, because it can't reach the uterus due to the blockage in the tube.

Blocked Fallopian Tubes and Ectopic Pregnancy

Ectopic pregnancy is a potentially *life-threatening condition* which requires immediate surgery or treatment. The surgery may result in one or both Fallopian tubes being removed including any other tissue the fertilized egg is attached to. This is why it's important to have an ultrasound *asap* after your pregnancy has been confirmed with a blood test. Your doctor will be able to see if the embryo is in the uterus – where it should be – or elsewhere. The smaller the embryo the less threat to your life and the smaller the damage from surgery or treatment with meds.

Causes of Blocked Fallopian Tubes

To understand how a fallopian tube can become blocked, you first need to understand a bit about the anatomy of these fascinating structures. Fallopian tubes are very tiny and narrow, measuring **10 centimeters (4 inches) in length** and **width of a regular spaghetti**. Inside this 10cm long spaghetti is a narrow passage the size of a *sewing needle*. The mature egg which needs to get through the tube is roughly the size of the full stop at the end of this sentence. So as you can imagine, it doesn't take much to block such a narrow space.

Inside the Fallopian tube are small fingerlike projections called *cilia*. Their job is to move the egg along the tube down into the uterus. The cilia are also found elsewhere in the body – for example in the lungs where they move impurities and mucus out of the lungs. In addition to housing cilia, the tubes are lined with *mucus* to help the egg slide along them. The end of the tube near the ovary contains *very slippery* mucus to ensure the egg can slide in quickly. The end of the tube closer to the uterus contains *thicker* mucus to prevent the egg from reaching the uterus too soon. This is to allow sufficient time for the endometrium to thicken to sustain implantation and pregnancy. Nature is so clever and amazing!

Mucus and Blocked Tubes

Any mucus producing organ can become *blocked*. Take your nose for example. When you get a bad cold your nose can become so blocked with mucus that you can no longer breathe through it. Or alternatively, if you get hay-fever or another allergic reaction your nose can run profusely.

The same can happen in any mucus-lined tissue/organ in your body; in your lungs, in your gut, in your vagina and in your fallopian tubes.

Types of Fallopian Tube Blockage

There are a few types of fallopian tube blockages and they are classified according to the location of the blockage in the tube. The three kinds of fallopian tube blockages are the following:

- **Proximal tubal occlusion.** This means that the blockage occurred in the part of the fallopian tube nearest to the uterus.
- **Midsegment/medial tubal obstruction.** In the case of a medial obstruction, the blockage occurred in the middle of the tube.
- **Distal tubal occlusion.** Distal tube occlusion means that the blockage occurred at the end of the tube, near the fimbriae^[2] close to the ovary.

Signs and Symptoms of Blocked Fallopian Tubes

Since it's a silent condition, most women with blocked fallopian tubes usually have no symptoms. However, in some cases where the fallopian tubes are blocked with fluid (in the case of hydrosalpinx = “hydro” (water) + (salpinx) fallopian tube), women may experience recurring pelvic or abdominal pain or abnormal vaginal discharge.

The condition hydrosalpinx is usually associated with pelvic inflammatory disease (PID), endometriosis, sexually transmitted infections or surgery. This condition may impair blood flow to the uterus^[3] and to the ovaries and may affect your ability to get pregnant.

5 Things That May Lead to Fallopian Tube Blockage

The most common factors which can affect the thickness of the mucus and contribute to blocked fallopian tubes are:

1. **Dehydration** – If you are dehydrated, your body has less ‘raw material’ – *water* – to produce mucus. Diets rich in sugar and salt, heated and air-conditioned rooms, coffee, exercise, alcohol and certain drugs can dehydrate you and increase your body’s demand for water.
2. [Diet](#) – What you eat on a regular basis can impact the thickness of your mucus. For example, *dairy* is known for making nasal and lung congestion worse. Dairy can also thicken your cervical mucus making it harder for the sperm to swim. Dairy can also thicken the mucus in your fallopian tubes making it harder for the sperm to enter and the egg to reach the uterus. Hence, dairy is a common contributor to blocked fallopian tubes. Your small intestine, where the nutrients from food are *absorbed*, will also struggle to do it’s work if there is a thick mucus coating covering the

absorption points.

3. [Pharmaceutical drugs](#) – [Some pharmaceutical drugs and over the counter drugs can thicken your mucus and contribute to blocked fallopian tubes](#). Especially cold and flu medicine which can make the mucus *thicker* or more *viscous* depending on the type of cough you have (dry or productive).
4. **Lifestyle choices** ([coffee](#), [alcohol](#) and **smoking**) – Coffee and alcohol are known *diuretics*. Caffeine acts as a diuretic making you urinate more often and alcohol dehydrates you and blocks the activity of your *ADH* (anti-diuretic hormone) which stops you from losing fluids. Smoking *paralyzes the cilia* in your lungs and the cilia in your fallopian tubes *preventing* them from pushing the egg and mucus along the tube.
5. **Infection** – (*pelvic inflammatory disease (PID)*, *chlamydia* and other [sexually transmitted diseases \(STDs\)](#) and the *IUD*) Some STD's and infections are silent and go unnoticed, others can be very painful and you know you had them. IUD's are uterine irritants leading to a greater risk of infection and more mucus production in the area which, in turn, increases the risk of blocked fallopian tubes.

Other more serious causes of blocked fallopian tubes are:

- Abdominal surgery
- Traumatic vaginal birth of the first child
- C-Section
- [Endometriosis](#)
- [Autoimmunity](#)

Some of these causes can lead to [scarring and adhesions](#) which can pull on and distort the fallopian tubes, in which case they may need to be removed surgically with laparoscopy.

Diagnosing Blocked Fallopian Tubes

Women suffering from blocked fallopian tubes usually have no symptoms except being unable to conceive. If you or your doctor suspect that blocked tubes may be the cause of your infertility, there are several diagnostic procedures that would help confirm whether you have blocked tubes or not.

- **Hysterosalpingogram (HSG)** - This procedure uses an x-ray and a contrast medium (iodine) to check your uterus and fallopian tubes for blockage. During an HSG, your gynecologist will insert a thin tube through the vagina and into the uterus and will fill your uterus with iodine so the dye spills into the fallopian tube. After that, your doctor will take images of your uterus and fallopian tubes using the fluoroscope x-ray to check for possible obstructions.
- **Sonohysterography** - This is a special ultrasound exam where fluid is put into the uterus and into the fallopian tubes. Using sound waves through the ultrasound, images of the uterus are created. The fluid used in sonohysterography helps create more detail as opposed to using ultrasound alone.
- **Chromotubation or chromopertubation** - A procedure similar to HSG, chromotubation

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involves injecting a contrast medium/dye into the fallopian tubes, usually indigo carmine or methylene blue. This procedure is usually done with laparoscopy and will require general anesthesia^[4].

- **Hystero contrast sonography** - Less invasive than chromotubation, this procedure involves the use of contrast agents and transvaginal ultrasound rather than laparoscopy to detect abnormalities in the fallopian tube.

Medical Treatment for Blocked Tubes

Women with blocked fallopian tubes may undergo surgical procedures to remove the blockage. For small adhesions, doctors may recommend to laparoscopic surgery to open the tubes. Surgery to repair damaged tubes may also be done in the case of damage due to ectopic pregnancy.

The following are examples of procedures used to treat blocked fallopian tubes:

- **Selective tubal cannulation** - usually performed in blockages in the proximal tube occlusions
- **Salpingectomy** - removal of part of the fallopian tube; usually performed in patients with hydrosalpinx in preparation for an IVF
- **Fimbrioplasty** - this refers to the repair of damaged fimbriae (fimbriae are clumped together due to scarring) to help with the transport of the ovum to the uterus
- **Salpingostomy** - it refers to an incision into a fallopian tube, usually to repair the damaged tube or to create another opening in the fallopian tube nearest to the ovary in the case of a hydrosalpinx

There are various risks involved in these surgical procedures and pregnancy success after these surgeries are not guaranteed. Some of the main concerns when it comes to fallopian tube surgeries include the following:

- the risk for infections (pelvic/abdominal)
- possible ectopic pregnancy
- scar tissue regrowth and adhesions that may again cause blockage in the fallopian tubes

13 Natural Treatments for Blocked Fallopian Tubes

While surgical interventions are available, there are natural treatments for blocked fallopian tubes that you can try to help unblock your fallopian tubes successfully:

1. **Stop eating mucus producing foods such as dairy and soy.** Dairy and soy products may thicken your mucus and block your fallopian tubes. Increasing mucus can also make it more difficult for the sperm to swim and fertilize the egg.
2. **Check your meds.** If you are taking any pharmaceutical drugs check with the pharmacist whether it has any properties which could affect your mucus. Any drug that can increase your mucus production may end up causing a blockage in your fallopian tubes.
3. **Stop smoking.** While it is already established that smoking is linked to long-term health problems and infertility, smoking is also linked to primary tubal infertility. According to one study, in women with primary tubal infertility, 39% were smokers and only 16% were non-smokers^[5].

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4. **Stop drinking coffee.** Apart from making you urinate more often which can lead to more mucus production, caffeine in coffee, according to TIME, slows the muscle cells in the fallopian tube—the ones responsible for moving the eggs from the ovaries to the uterus.
5. **Stop drinking alcohol.** [Alcohol consumption](#) is linked to female infertility^[6] caused by various factors including obstructed fallopian tubes. Eliminating alcohol from your diet may help you clear your fallopian tubes and increase your chances at getting pregnant.
6. **Drink more water.** Increasing your water intake can help ensure that your mucus production is normal and prevent it from getting too thick and causing tubal obstructions.
7. **Eat more garlic to naturally prevent bacterial infections.** Pelvic inflammatory disease and other infections can cause scarring and adhesions that may eventually cause blockage in your fallopian tubes, make it harder for you to conceive and predispose you to ectopic pregnancy.
8. **Use castor oil packs.** The use of castor oil packs supports female reproductive health, including ovarian, uterine and fallopian tube health. These packs promote healing through stimulation of circulation and the lymphatic system^[7] and the liver.
9. **Exercise regularly** to improve your circulation and get the lymph moving.
10. **Get an abdominal massage** or use a **self-massage video** at home which I recommend. You can learn more about this self-fertility massage [here](#).
11. **Get an [acupuncture treatment](#)** to help move Qi (i.e. blood and mucus).
12. **Visualize your fallopian tubes clear** and the fertilized egg smoothly rolling down into the uterus.
13. **Take systemic enzymes like Serrapeptase.** Systemic enzymes aid the immune system in removing adhesions and scar tissue in the reproductive system and elsewhere in the body.

How To Unblock Fallopian Tubes Naturally With Herbs

Having a consultation with a Naturopath who specialises in fertility will enable you to take a herbal mixture that is specific to you. However, there are also easily accessible herbs, which may also be beneficial. These herbs increase circulation, reduce inflammation and may reduce mucous in the fallopian tubes:

- **Turmeric**
- **Ginger**
- **Cinnamon**
- **Cayenne**

These herbs are similar to the ingredients of the '[spicy fertility tea](#)' and can be made the same way. Enjoy a cup of this tea twice a day and you'll be on your way to reducing inflammation and mucous in your fallopian tubes.

You can also include these herbs and spices in your cooking on a regular basis.

You can have an *HSG (Hysterosalpingogram)* procedure which is used to see if your tubes are blocked and can also be used to treat the blocked fallopian tubes by rinsing them with saline solution during the procedure.

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Do you have blocked fallopian tubes? Have you used a medical or a natural method to help you unblock the tubes? I would love to hear your thoughts!

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