

## What You Need To Know About Sperm Antibodies

by Iva Keene MRMed. ND. - Qualified Naturopathic Physician - Wednesday, May 20, 2009

<https://natural-fertility-prescription.com/sperm-antibodies/>

Sperm antibodies (or antisperm antibodies, ASA) are antibodies produced by the body against sperm. As their name implies, these sperm antibodies fight sperm because the immune system recognizes the sperm as an intruder. Contributes to both male and female infertility, sperm antibodies, sadly, are a common cause of infertility among couples. 20% of all cases of infertility are due to mutual infertility, and **20% due to unexplained infertility**<sup>[1]</sup>. Combined, that's nearly half of all the cases of infertility! If the woman is ovulating, doesn't have blocked tubes, hormonal imbalances or other reproductive system conditions, and, the man has normal sperm parameters, what's the problem?

### Why Can't They Get Pregnant?

Immune-related infertility usually relates to the following:

1. [Presence of sperm antibodies](#)
2. Toxic mucus
3. [Food intolerances](#)

In this article, we'll explore how these three play their role in your fertility.

## What Does It Mean for You When You're Getting Pregnant With Antisperm Antibodies?

### In Women

In women, sperm antibodies are a female immune response to sperm. Women with sperm antibodies are [having an allergic reaction to their partner's sperm](#). Although not fully understood, this may affect the couple's ability to conceive. According to studies which examined the relationship among sperm antibodies, miscarriage and conception in infertile couples<sup>[2]</sup>, the presence of these antibodies in the female partner is linked to:

- [first-trimester miscarriage](#)
- [infertility](#)
- reproductive failure<sup>[3]</sup>

### In Men

On the other hand, in men, sperm antibodies (ASA or antisperm antibodies) can cause a condition called 'immune infertility'. **Men with ASA have poor sperm parameters** — they have low values for sperm concentration, sperm motility and sperm liquefaction (the time it takes for the semen to become more liquid at the time of ejaculation)<sup>[4]</sup>.

## How Do You Test for Sperm Antibodies?

The first test you should consider is a **post-coital test**. This test will show how many sperms are still alive after intercourse in the woman's reproductive system. If the woman has sperm antibodies in her mucus or has overly acidic mucus due to [toxin overload](#) in the body then the sperm will not fare well and their minutes (not days) will be numbered.

## Sperm Antibodies: 4 Things to Consider

When it comes to sperm antibodies, here are 4 important things to consider:

### 1. Channels of Elimination and Sperm Antibodies: Toxic Mucus

You see, your body will rely on all possible channels of elimination when it comes to getting rid of toxins. They are mostly mucus and discharge producing organs such as the following:

- nose
- lungs
- skin
- kidneys
- gut
- vagina and penis

This is where detoxing comes into the picture. Couples (regardless of whether you are infertile or not) should consider detoxing before conception. Heavy metals exposure has a detrimental impact on the immune system, especially on autoantibody production which can lead to infertility in susceptible individuals. One study found that **patients with mercury allergy had more antisperm antibodies**<sup>[5]</sup> than patients without mercury allergy.

### 2. Food Intolerances and Sperm Antibodies

If the immune system is in overdrive (due to constant exposure to food you are intolerant to) it can adversely react to your partner's sperm and /or fertilized egg and destroy it. This can lead to the creation of antibodies to your partner's sperm and can predispose you to miscarriages and stillbirths.

#### How Do You Check for Food Intolerances?

In the case of food intolerances, you will not necessarily know you've got one until you do a proper blood test or you simply eliminate the food from your diet and wait to see if the symptoms go away. It can take up to 3 months for the immunocomplexes (antibody and antigen sticking together) to clear from your system.

#### Things to Remember:

- Our body is one closed circuit.

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- Everything that enters your body: through the air that you breathe, food and drinks you consume or lotions and potions you rub on your skin will affect every single cell in your body!
- It all ends up in your blood. Your blood carries it though kilometers of blood vessels from the biggest aorta to the tiniest capillaries barely visible to the eye. Just think about that, for a second.

And the next time you want to consume something you know is not healthy just remember the closed circuit and know that it won't just come out without leaving any damage behind.

### 3. Sperm Antibodies in the Mucus

Is there an antisperm antibodies natural treatment for women with ASA? If the woman's mucus contains sperm antibodies, more than just a detox is required. Studies have shown that women can develop antisperm antibodies if:

- sperm has come into contact with the mucosal or systemic immune system.
- This can happen if there are minor wounds in the vagina, rectum or the oral cavity.

Sperm antibodies in cervical mucus cause the heads of the sperm to stick to the cervical mucus.

#### Antisperm Antibodies Natural Treatment

To treat sperm antibodies in the mucus, you'll need to use condoms for 3-6 months while the woman's immune system is addressed with:

- [diet](#)
- [nutritional supplements](#)
- [herbs](#)
- and other [complementary medicine treatments](#) as required

During the 3-6 month period, because the woman didn't come into contact with the sperm, the present antibodies to sperm will be broken down and no new ones will be produced. This is also a very beneficial time to learn about timing your most fertile days!

#### After the 3-6 month period:

You may remove the condom and have intercourse at the most fertile time to conceive. This will not allow enough time for your body to produce new antibodies. Also after having your immune system treated and retrained during those 3-6 months, it is likely that your immune system would not react again. If the woman has sperm antibodies in her blood and not just the mucus, than just relying on the condom will not be enough and a longer immune system treatment may be required.

### 4. Men Can Have Sperm Autoantibodies

How can men have sperm antibodies? Here are 4 ways men can develop antisperm antibodies:

#### A. Abnormal Immune Response

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Autoimmunity results from the [abnormal immune response against the body's own tissue](#). Men can develop antibodies against their own sperm. This can cause the sperm to agglutinate (or stick together) or cause the tails of the sperm to stick to the cervical mucus.

### B. Childhood or Early Development

Autoimmunity of any kind often derives from childhood or even earlier development in the womb. If the mother was consuming foods she was intolerant to during her pregnancy, then her antibodies influenced what type of immune system dominance the child will have. The immune system is fascinating in that it needs to learn the ropes. Unlike the other cells in the body, it intimately interacts with our environment every day.

#### A Good Example of This:

If you have an inflamed gut, due to a bacterial or parasitic infection or as a result of food intolerance, large molecules from food will enter the sterile environment behind the gut, through the gaps between the cells. Once they are in the area of the body they are not meant to be in, the immune system will pick them up and treat them as invading pathogens. Now that the immune system has been exposed to this substance once, it'll produce a whole army of antibodies against this food. So now each time you eat this food, they'll attack. Over time, this will exhaust the immune reserve, making it less robust when it comes to bacteria, viruses and cancers and more hypersensitive to its own tissue and innocuous substances such as pollen and food. This starts a vicious cycle if the food intolerance is not picked up upon and treated naturopathically.

### C. Breastfeeding

If as a child you were not breastfed, then you may have missed out on your mother's antibodies. and This may have predisposed you to an immune system that is overly reactive. If, on the other hand, your mother has many allergies, then you can consider yourself lucky for not having been breastfed.

### D. Living in a Super Clean Environment

Also if you grew up in a super clean and sterile environment, your immune system didn't have any bugs to learn from. Some childhood diseases and contact with dirt as a kid are very beneficial for the immune system. They teach your immune system what sort of antibodies it should be producing, so it's less likely to attack food molecules or your own tissue.

## The Good News Is, the Immune System Can Be Retrained in 3 Easy Steps

Since sperm antibodies result from immune system issues, the remedy for this involves retraining the immune system. Here are 3 ways to do this:

1. Remove the triggers for 3 to 6 months or longer, depending on the severity.
2. Heal the inflammation and the mucosal surfaces, with the right nutrients and diet.
3. Treat the immune system with adequate protein intake, a clean and pure diet, nutritional supplements, probiotics and herbs.

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Key nutrients to consider are **vitamin C**, [zinc](#), [selenium](#), [vitamins E and A \(or betacarotene\)](#), omega 3, and herbs such as Panax ginseng, Echinacea, Hemidesmus, Astragalus, Withania and Saw palmetto.

## ASA and Unexplained Infertility are Related

In this article, we looked at the causes of sperm antibodies and touched on unexplained infertility as it relates to food intolerances. There are plenty of other environmental influences that can contribute to unexplained infertility. Natural fertility treatment for sperm antibodies consists of abstinence from the triggers, dietary and lifestyle adjustments and nutritional and herbal support for the immune system. Once you truly grasp the interconnectedness of all body systems you'll understand why and how what you eat, drink and breathe can make all the difference to your fertility. Could sperm antibodies be affecting your ability to conceive? Have you considered testing for sperm antibodies? Share your thoughts!

### References

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