

## Should we steer clear of the hot tub while trying to get pregnant?

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Men who are trying to become fathers should probably avoid frequent or prolonged soaks in the hot tub. Studies have demonstrated a significant reduction in sperm count when the testes are repeatedly exposed to heat. It may take four to six months after a dip in the hot tub for a man's sperm count to return to normal.

There's also some evidence that heat exposure can damage sperm DNA. Men's testes are outside the body for a reason: They need to be in a cooler environment to produce healthy sperm.

Activities that generate heat around the scrotum, such as hot tubs, bicycling, saunas, and wearing tight underwear are probably okay in moderation. But a man with a marginal sperm count might want to avoid them while he and his partner are trying to conceive.

There's no evidence to suggest that heat affects a woman's eggs, but we do know that [hot tubs and saunas aren't recommended during pregnancy](#).

Some studies show that raising your body temperature during early pregnancy (in a hot tub or sauna, or in a hot yoga class, for example) increases the risk of neural tube birth defects and other congenital anomalies. A 2003 study reported that women who used hot tubs early in pregnancy were twice as likely to [miscarry](#).

If you really want to play it safe, skip soaking in the hot tub when trying to get pregnant, too.