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There is no high quality evidence that **antioxidant supplements** help to **increase**

a **woman's chances** of having a **baby**

, according to the results of a new systematic review. The review, published in *The Cochrane Library*

, found women were no more likely to conceive when taking oral antioxidants and that there was limited information about potential harms.

Around a quarter of couples planning a baby are thought to have difficulty conceiving.

Women undergoing fertility treatment often take dietary supplements, including antioxidants, to try to increase their chances of becoming pregnant. However, many antioxidant supplements taken to improve fertility are unregulated and there is limited evidence on their safety and effects.

The researchers analysed data from 28 trials involving a total of 3,548 women attending fertility clinics.

Antioxidants did not increase the women's chances of conceiving or having a baby. The results show no significant increase in women becoming

pregnant when taking antioxidants compared to those taking placebos or being given standard treatment, including folic acid.

“There is no evidence in this review that suggests

taking an antioxidant is beneficial for women who are trying to conceive,” said lead researcher, Marian Showell, who works in Obstetrics and Gynaecology at the University of Auckland in

Auckland, New Zealand.

Only 14 of the trials reported on adverse effects such as

miscarriage and
ectopic
pregnancy.
Women taking
antioxidants
experienced no
more adverse
effects compared

to those who
received placebos
or standard
treatment.

Overall, the

researchers
considered the
quality of the
trials to be low
or very low and
the number of
different

antioxidants
tested made it
difficult to make
comparisons.
“We could not
assess whether
one antioxidant

was better than another,” said Showell.

Do Antioxidants Improve a Woman's Chances of Conceiving?

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