



EP 026: Improving Fertility Through Egg Quality with Aimee Raupp

This is the Fertile Mindset Podcast, where we explore all the emotional aspects of fertility to support you on your path to parenthood. My name is Sarah Holland. I'm the Fertile Mindset coach and a mother to two children after my own fertility challenges. I hope you find all the support and inspiration you need within this podcast, to carry you forward on your fertility journey towards your own successful outcome.

It's also my wish that through listening to these episodes, you rediscover how to enjoy life now and live it to the full while you wait for your baby.

Now let's begin today's episode.

Hello, and welcome back to the Fertile Mindset Podcast today. I have the great pleasure of sharing a recent chat I had with Aimee Raupp on the topic of egg quality, and whether we can actually improve our fertility.

Aimee is already a best-selling author of the books *Chill Out* and *Get Healthy, Yes, You Can Get Pregnant*, and *Body Belief*. And now she's about to release another book that I'm sure will be so popular too, called *The Egg Quality Diet*. I invited Aimee to speak to us during her busy book launch week and within this chat, we talked about what a fertility diet really is, exactly why, and how it can improve quality, and we talked a lot about the whole mindset piece of it, following a fertility diet, and the positive shifts that can bring to both our perspective and emotional wellbeing.

If you'd like to order Aimee's new book, *The Egg Quality Diet* you'll find the links on the podcast page at www.fertilemindset.com/episode-026. And if you are listening in the prelaunch time before the 13th of June, 2021, then check out a free video series that Aimee has to introduce you to the topics of the book at www.AimeeRaupp.com/fertilityseries.

If you do watch the videos and then pre-order the book, you'll also receive a free gift from Aimee so do check that out as soon as you can.

Now as you can probably tell Aimee is so generous with the support she offers the fertility community, and I'm thrilled to share that Aimee will also be joining us in my private membership group, the Fertile Mindset Sanctuary for a live Q and A session in a few days' time, so if you are a member of the sanctuary, look out for an email with the date and time to join us.

Right. It's time now to hear from Aimee and dive into the topic of improving egg quality through diet.

Sarah: Hi, Aimee. It's really lovely to have you here on the podcast. Thank you so much for joining us.

Aimee: I'm so happy to be here, Sarah. Thank you for having me.

Sarah: It's been a little while since we've spoken and not at all on the podcast yet. I don't know what took me so long to invite you, but I'm really pleased that you're here now.

Aimee: Well, I'm so happy and I mean the first six months, I mean, I think that's pretty good. So thank you.

Sarah: Yeah, you are. Absolutely. So we're actually meeting for a very special reason right now. And we're going to be talking about something that I think is at the front of most people's minds when they're on a fertility journey, which is all about egg quality. And I know you have your amazing book coming out in just a couple of days, and we're going to have an amazing discussion around it that I'm just, I'm really looking forward to hearing what your latest kind of research and findings are around egg quality, because I know it's something you're really passionate about. So can you give us a little Intro into what we're going to be talking about then and why quality is so important?

Aimee: Well, Egg quality is, I do think, the basis of healthy pregnancies and healthy children, right? Which is ultimately the goal for all of our clients and what they're trying to achieve is not just to get pregnant, but to get pregnant with a healthy child that they can carry to term and take home. Right. And so it does seem to come down to, I mean, the sperm is also very important and let's not underplay that at all. And my intention with this book is that if they are partnered in a heterosexual couple, that the partner does this with them. But the egg makes up a big part of the health of that future pregnancy. So it does really come down to the quality of that egg.

Sarah: Yes, so much depends on it, doesn't it? Absolutely. And I know that you're very passionate about people kind of embracing that possibility of change as well. Whatever that current situation is, that doesn't have to be the end of the story. I mean, is it really possible to change fertility and change egg quality I'm sure is what people are asking?

Aimee: Hell yes. Hell yes. Hell yes. Like you have. You know, and that's really probably why I wrote this book. Like I didn't really need another fertility book. I already have one that I think is pretty good and serving lots of women, but I was so compelled by the current research. And then also as my practice has grown so much, you know, with coaching women all over the world and now I have, you know, coaching fertility coaches that work under me. So we're just reaching so many more people, you know, it's just, the data is so compelling. It's just in your face that these women are turning their fertility around. And I want everyone to have that opportunity, and to not, you know. You and I are always, so heart-centred in our teachings and so I say this keeping that in mind. But like to not give up, unless it feels like you're ready for that, you know? And, and by giving up, I mean, maybe you're going to then pursue other options or decide to pursue motherhood in another way, that doesn't involve your own eggs. And I bless that as well, but yeah for so many women, it feels like the opportunity has been taking from them before they've decided what their path should be. And the data and the research just isn't in their face, as much as it should be, that there are so many things from a mental, emotional perspective, from a physical, from a lifestyle, from a diet perspective that have been scientifically shown to optimise egg quality, mitochondrial health, cellular function, and balance hormones and improve fertility. And so I want everyone to have this information so that they can feel empowered and then make their own choices from that space.

Sarah: You've hit on something so, so important there about making the right decisions at the right time and not feeling like that decision has been taken out of your hands before you were ready. That's heart-breaking. Isn't it? You know, when someone still feels that real connection to having their own baby, maybe a real connection to using their own eggs and want to explore every avenue first. And perhaps they are one doctor that they've consulted or whoever has given some, you know, news that doesn't seem so hopeful. Perhaps the test results aren't looking so great, and they're given this black and white kind of decision to make. It's hard when you don't feel like you're a part of that. So I think, and obviously your book does this as well, but you know, educating yourself about what it really means, you know, to have fertility problems and poor egg quality and so on. And what else can be really done. It puts you back in control, doesn't it? Of that knowledge, those decisions, making the decisions at the right time and not feeling like things have been missed or, you know, just not even recognised. So yeah, I think to be in the right mind place with your decisions is so important.

Aimee: Yeah, I always say, and I'm sure you do too. It's like, this is your body, your time, your money, your resources, your emotional bandwidth, these are your decisions. And so I think so much of the work, that my team and I do, is to put women back in the driver's seat of their fertility. And take them out of, you know, the backseat where they've been told, oh, this is your age, these are your statistics, these are your, you know, these are your chances, like, good luck, you know. And it just feels so disempowering. Someone's had something that's been taken from them. And so, yeah, it's really about handing it back to them and saying, you have the choice here. And so, you know, when, you know, you know, if you've done this enough and you've tried and it hasn't been successful and you're ready to move on to donor or to adoption or to pursue other paths by all means, you know, but like listen to your heart versus being cornered into a decision.

Sarah: Yeah, back in the driver's seat, I love that. So the book that we're talking about, that's coming out on the 13th of June is The Egg Quality Diet, clinically proven, a hundred-day fertility diet to balance hormones, reduce inflammation, improve quality, and optimise your ability to get and stay pregnant.

Now we're in the kind of launch, pre-launch period here aren't we? Before the 13th, as we speak to each other, and as this podcast goes out. And we're going to be talking shortly about how you can prepare for this book. And I know you've got some lovely resources that you're giving as well, a free video series to give more information about how to really improve egg quality and about what the books are going to be about, and to really preface it in an amazing way. So we'll give links to that and they're also on the podcast page if anyone's listening directly on my website at the podcast, that's at www.fertilemindset.com/podcast.

But before we get into that, and actually direct people where to go and to start this amazing work, I just want to think of it from my perspective, with what I know my listeners are really concerned about as well, is the emotional experience of their fertility journey and how overwhelming it can seem at times, you know. There's always something else to do, and something else to research, and it's so reassuring obviously to get books like this, from someone who is really well-recognised, and proven with all your work, and a guide, you know, and literally a hundred day for 30 days, you know what to expect from this, you know, what's going to be happening. But yeah, can we talk a little bit about the stress that's involved with making these kinds of changes as well, and how that feels to step into a new way of doing things, you know, a new fertility diet that is proven to help, but having that motivation, that strength to do it as well, cause I think that's really important?

Aimee: It's so important and it is, again, comes back to your choice and what feels right to you and empowering. But it's, you know, you and I never teach the diet is the only part to this. Right. And I'm super clear about that in the book. It is a diet. 100 days of a diet, and you

get menus and meal plans and shopping lists and all sorts of resources that go with it in the book.

And once I feel like the reader probably has it under their belt of like how the diet lays out, then each week I start layering in additional resources that I've put on the website that goes with the book that is not about diet, but, you know, I think to get the mindset in the, you know, the. If you will, right place to start a diet is to come at it from a space of, well, have I tried this? So, you know, often, right? The, I think a common fear or belief that I hear a lot is I've tried everything and nothing's working. And so, okay well then look through what this diet has laid out. Have you actually tried this? Have you tried a full-blown elimination diet that is a hundred days long? That is macronutrient balanced for the right macronutrients to optimise fertility. Have you actually tried that and committed to 100 days? Because if you haven't. Okay. So then, okay, now I have this tool. I can do that, right. And I think we've made it very approachable price wise, you know, for \$9 US for the Kindle version of the book.

But so that's one thing to ask yourself of like, have I actually tried everything? And am I willing? Does it, do I feel like I have it in me to follow this? And what I've tried to do is make it as straightforward as I possibly can for you. And then also I layered in on the first few pages of the book is just testimonials from women all over the world, all sorts of ages and all sorts of diagnoses and who have followed this diet and have seen shifts. So that you can also see, okay, these are real women like me who have done this. And hopefully that motivates and inspires you as well. And then even still, and I talk about this in the book too. Maybe you give it a read, you take from it what you can, this time around, and then you can slowly layer pieces of it in as well, that you work with it the way it's going to work for you. And I think that's a super important piece to it, is just figuring out what's going to feel the best to you. But then also I think looking at the science is going to be super-duper inspiring and helpful.

Sarah: Gosh you touched on so many areas there, before we talk about the science, because I really want to dig into the science, but going back to what you said there about seeing those stories from other women and the success stories, you know, and reading that inspiration is amazing and I think, you know, most people, not everybody, but most people on this journey feel pretty isolated, don't they, pretty alone.

They don't necessarily know many other people who are going through a similar journey, so they haven't got much to kind of compare themselves against or to ask those for success stories and hope and inspiration. So you can get to this place where you've had your perhaps diagnosis and test results that don't seem to have much hope within them from your doctor or perhaps you've had treatment cycles, IVF cycles that haven't been successful. And you get to a point where you don't have much hope left, even though potentially there could be hope, you know, but it's, so seeing the real-life examples and the science to back it up which you're going to talk about in a second. Yeah, I think that can give hope where perhaps it, you didn't think it could be, you know.

You didn't think it's possible to connect with any hope, but when you can see real, tangible results, real science to back this up, you know, one doc, consulting one doctor, even two doctors or whatever, if they're all looking at health in the same way, you're not really going to be getting a lot of new information either are you? You need to kind of, right, a bit further.

I spoke to someone recently that said she was talking to her, Fertility doctor about following a fertility diet. And the doctor just looked blankly at her and said, well, you're not overweight. You don't need a diet. He had no concept of what, you know, a fertility diet would be because it's not in his training and it's not, you know, not the area that he works with, so yeah, I think using this book, as you say, a very low-cost way of gaining some real hope and inspiration is a great springboard. And then of course implementing it for a hundred days. It's a really, it's a good framework to commit to, isn't it?

Aimee: And I also think too, to touch on that fertility diet work too, because that was the impetus for me, of actually creating this book Because I have a diet laid out in Yes, You Can Get Pregnant and I think I'm fairly clear with the guidelines of the diet, but then I would get women who were coaching with me or my team, and they'd say, oh, I'm doing the diet. You know, I'm on the fertility diet, you know, I'm gluten free and dairy free. I don't eat sugar. I don't eat soy and we'd say, okay, you know, we always collect food diaries, and so we would collect these food diaries, and we do case reviews with my team every week. And, you know, diary after diary, these women are, you know, they're eating well, they're eating real food and they're. Well, some of them, you know, some of them are eating a lot of gluten-free packaged processed foods and they're eating lots of like gluten free carby stuff and missing.

They're not getting enough vegetables; they're not getting enough fats. Right. And so it's interesting because I think that was for me, such a big starting point where everybody's like, oh, I, you know, I've been doing the diet. I'm totally doing the diet. And it's like, okay, what does that actually mean? I want you to break down for me, what are you actually, you know, like I just had another woman who, you know, she's following this plan, the egg quality diet plan actually. And she sent me her food diary and she's still, she's going many, many hours without eating. And that's, you know, we know from a scientific perspective, not, but for, for achieving balanced hormones or putting the body into a state or feeling safe and secure so that it could ovulate right efficiently and effectively.

So I kind of stepped back and I was like, okay, wait, they're actually doing great, but they're, they're missing some key steps here and I think doctors that do talk about fertility diets, they'll just say like, oh yeah, do the Mediterranean diet or go paleo it's very vague. Right? There's no actual structure. And so what I thought about was I, I sat down and just said, okay, I'm going to give 100 days of actual structure. You know, like exactly. This is what, and of course there's templates you can pick and choose, but that every single week I remind you like these are the daily tips, you've got to make sure you're hitting your marks on your protein, your vegetables, your fats, and again, taking into that macronutrient breakdown that is so important.

And also the other thing that I would see is women would say, oh, I'm doing the diet, but then they were also still suffering from symptoms, or their ovulation was still irregular, or maybe they weren't ovulating, or they were having really heavy periods. Obviously, they're still not pregnant. They still have a lot of other inflammatory symptoms. Right. And so to me, it's like, okay, we have to actually dig a little deeper because something else is going on here. Like maybe you're eating too much almond flour or, you know, whatever it is, but that, or I think typically it's just the wrong balance of things is what people are eating and so it's, nothing's actually wrong with what you're eating, It's just the ratios.

And this whole process is so overwhelming and so emotionally, you know, painful and consuming that. Why not? You know, I just thought, well, why not just actually lay it all out for them in the simplest fashion possible instead of, you know what I did, in Yes, You Can Get Pregnant and what a lot of us do, who write books about fertility is we jam it into one chapter, right? So one chapter of the book is here's the diet, do you know what I mean? And then the next chapter is here's the lifestyle. And so instead I was like, I'm just gonna make a whole book that's just about the diet so that it's really drilled in, of what it needs to look like.

And then, and for me, I've seen those changes, you know, where I can switch a girl from the kind of standard fertility diet to this style, egg quality diet. And you'll all of a sudden see them either get pregnant naturally or they'll start producing PGS normal embryos when they weren't, before they're responding better to their IVFs, whatever it is. But it's these small shifts that, and over I think a three-month period, or a hundred days makes a real lasting effect.

Sarah: You said the word simplify there, and that's exactly what I was thinking as you're talking about it, you know, really make this simple and easy to follow. And I know as soon as

I opened your book and I could see the contents and how it's broken down, it's not just 100 days and you do this for a hundred days, you know, it's got different things that you go through and it's yeah, really easy to follow. And anything, you know, I'm a big, big fan for anything that takes away stress and overwhelm, and making things simpler and easier. Yeah. It can only be a good thing.

There was actually a part quite early on in your book that I just want to read out cause this really spoke to me, so I hope that's okay to share it. Just a short, you know, I know that food is so emotional. It absolutely is. And you know, and often the habits that we get into with food are because of the emotional story behind it and the emotional connections we make to certain foods and so on. But we can kind of harness that knowledge can't we, of the emotional connection to food in a positive way. We can shift the perspective on it and gain a healthy, emotional connection with food. So I just love this paragraph, which I'm going to read out.

“Picture it. You are thoughtfully food shopping for quality ingredients that you are excited to cook with. You are preparing your meal with love and appreciation for the nourishment it will provide. You are then eating and sharing your meal with others. All with a grateful heart.

If this sounds somewhat unrealistic to you, don't worry in the pages that follow, I will provide you with all the tools to make the shift as simple and doable as possible. The key is being mindful and viewing food as so much more than something we eat, but something that enhances our health. Something that comes from nature to provide our bodies with nutrients, for optimal functioning, and most importantly, a tool that you can use to not only improve your fertility and egg quality, but your life emotionally and spiritually.

And when you view cooking and eating as an extension of your health, you will increase your odds of getting pregnant.”

I think that's just so beautiful, Aimee and if that's what we can expect from your book, that's exactly the right perspective.

Aimee: But it is about coming home to you and learning how to nourish you, you know, some, actually Beth on my team came up with this line about the book and it was like, you don't need a fertility diet, you need your fertility diet. And I do, I think that's really, you know, such a great summary of what I'm offering in the book because, because it is 100 days, but you eliminate a bunch of foods in the beginning and then you, and you kind of live in this baseline if you will, for about 11 days and then we start to reintroduce foods and we, you know, I'm constantly week by week having you fill out this questionnaire, I call it the kinks in your body questionnaire. And so you can see symptoms besides whether or not you're getting pregnant, because that's the only thing you're really focused on, right?

But like all the other symptoms that you're having, whether it's, you know, sleep issues or headaches or constipation or acne, or, you know, painful periods or no cervical mucus, that your sex drive is low, whatever. You start to see week by week that they shift and to understand that, oh, my food is really tied to how my body responds and to start to. I think it becomes so empowering to start to understand how food makes you feel and not in an unhealthy way, but also in a healthy way. I feel so nourished and balanced, eating this way and then when I'm emotional and stressed, I eat the other way or, you know, choose different things that may be, you know, I call it a case of the 'effits', like as in, you know, F * C K it, that it's just like, screw it and I don't care about my body and don't care how I feel because I'm so mad, I'm so upset.

And so, you know, that's. We all have those moments and we're all human, and there's nothing wrong with you for doing that, but that's not super nourishing to yourself, right. That's

a way of abusing yourself and attacking yourself and so if you were to give it this solid 100 days and really learn, oh my gosh, it's not just, you know, that I have to be gluten free. Like. Yeah. You know, Quinoa upsets my stomach or too much almond flour or nightshade vegetables, you know, like things I figured out it's like, oh yeah, like white potatoes are a no go for me, right.

So it's like little things that you'll figure out as you do a diet like this, and you figure out your fertility diet, and it's really, you know, to be honest, it's not your fertility diet. It's your diet for optimal health when you're in optimal health, fertility flows from there.

Sarah: Yeah. And I love that idea of having a checklist and looking at your health overall to see what is shifting and what is changing because yeah, the ultimate goal is that I get pregnant and that's what you're working towards to have that healthy baby. But in the meantime, it's really motivating to see the things that I'm doing now are helping my skin improve or my sleep improve or my energy. And you can see these real, tangible ways that your health is improving. So therefore, you know that your fertility, health and cell health and egg health must be improving as well as on the side. So yeah. Yeah, really motivating to see that.

Oh, go ahead. I was going to say though, That hit me is like the important piece to focus on because what your overall health tells us is the state of inflammation, cellular health, and mitochondrial health in your body and what the current research shows is If you improve your mitochondrial health, you absolutely, absolutely are going to improve your egg quality, even as you're older, like there's actual data to show that your chronological age does not have to match your physiological age and you can actually, you know, I'm trying to figure out a different way to say it, but reverse your aging process for be, I guess the best way to say it is be cellularly younger than you are chronologically.

And that is significantly impactful because that's basically saying like, oh, okay. So if the ovaries are developing, you know, follicles, right, every single month, and recruiting follicles and, you know, the nucleus of that egg in each and every one of us is perfect. There's nothing wrong with that egg. All your eggs are actually good. It's the fluid that surrounds the nucleus of that egg inside that follicle that impacts the development. Right? And so that fluid is impacted by your lifestyle and your diet and your mitochondrial health. And if the mitochondrial in that fluid, in that extracellular fluid is not healthy. You are not going to create healthy eggs when that, follicle releases it.

And so to think about that, that you actually can significantly impact the health of the, if you will, the fluid that supports egg development in your body, and that will then impact your egg quality. And while you're doing that, actually every single cell in your body is going to get healthier, too. It's not just this specific to the ovaries.

Sarah: That's so interesting to hear isn't it, because then you can understand what is happening with each of those changes. What is going on in that cellular level. And that's motivating in itself as well. Not just be doing this in the dark, wondering how.

Aimee: Have less gas, less gas and better skin and more energy. I mean, that's motivating right there. Right. You know?

Sarah: Absolutely, yeah. Now I know we talked just earlier that we are in the launch period right now of your book. It hasn't been released as yet, that's on the 13th of June, but you do have a really lovely, free video series that's happening right now. Could you tell us a little bit about that so we can start watching those videos?

Aimee: Yes. So that will, those video series will stay up until the book is available on June 13th. So it is a five-part video series called Can I Actually Improve My Fertility? And if you want, like a real deep dive into the science that I talk about in the book, the first video, I share all the recent research about what we can do from an aging and mitochondrial health perspective and what a lot of the data shows from an ovarian health perspective.

The second video, I talk about the common pitfalls in the standard fertility diet. The next video, I talk about the common health issues that are blocking your fertility, like poor gut health or immune system challenges. And then I get, in the next video I get into the fertility diet that really works and I talk about, briefly the egg quality diet and what it focuses on and why the aspects, the, especially the macronutrients and the servings really matter. And then, I get into the last video of like, why it actually works, and you know, a little more science there, a little clinical insight, and pearls. And then, that's when I also talk about the release of the book and so then you can go ahead and order the book at that point.

Sarah: Okay. What a great introduction to really understand what this is all going to be about. So anytime from now, when the podcast is going live, till the 13th of June, you'll be able to access the fertility series and that's an www.AimeeRaupp.com/fertilityseries, but we will also put the link as a clickable link on the podcast page at www.fertilemindset.com/podcast. If you are listening to this after the 13th of June, as I know many people come back months and months later afterwards, and re-listen to these podcasts, then of course, you know, Aimee's book is still for sale you can find that at Amazon it's called, The Egg Quality Diet by Aimee Raupp. We will also put direct purchase links as well to Amazon on the podcast page.

So thank you for sharing so much with us today, Aimee, it's been really interesting to dive into this more and I can really understand what you were saying there about needing to expand a chapter on fertility diet and make it into a whole book, because it's a huge area to talk about isn't it and to guide through it.

Aimee: It's huge and it is overwhelming. And there, you know, I think it's very confusing for so many of our clients and again, it's like, if we can. How do we reduce stress on, you know, all of you, while you're trying to make this baby and so it's. How can we simplify it? And that's what I saw, like, okay, I can, and I'm not going to say the diet is super easy. It can be intense, but you are worth it. And your body and this future baby is worth it and enforce investing the time and energy. And at the very least just reading through and taking up the nuggets that you feel would work for your life. But, you know, my intention is that you follow the 100 days all the way through and enlist anyone in your life who wants to do it with you, to do it with you, because it is a powerful elimination diet where at the end, you're going to be very crystal clear on what works for your body and what doesn't. And you should also feel health a lot better. And hopefully you're that much closer to your baby.

Sarah: Fantastic. Wonderful. And this is meeting ticking all the boxes that I like, of de-stressing, informing, empowering, you know, it's so important for our experience on our fertility journey. So thank you so much for coming today and talking to us. I know you're in a very busy time now, as you're getting ready for the launch. So I really appreciate you spending the time with us today.

Aimee: Always an honour to be with you, Sarah. So thank you so much for helping me spread the word and the message about this book. I really appreciate it.

Sarah: You're so welcome. Thank you, Aimee.

Thank you for listening to the Fertile Mindset Podcast.

If the topics talked about here sounded like I was speaking directly to you and your thoughts, then I would really love to invite you into the Fertile Mindset Sanctuary.

This is my fertility support membership, where you can free yourself from stress, worry and any emotions that don't feel helpful, so you can then create a naturally supportive mindset, your Fertile Mindset.

In the Sanctuary I'll guide you through using the emotional healing technique I use at Fertile Mindset called EFT, and you'll soon be feeling less stressed and more joyful.

If you're not already in the Sanctuary, do come and join us now, starting with the BUD level of membership, which is completely free of charge.

Go to www.fertilemindset.com/sanctuary to join, and then watch the welcome class, which will give you a fast start into taking back control over the emotional side of your fertility.

I look forward to seeing you there, and at the next episode of the Fertile Mindset Podcast.