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Ovulation and pregnancy test strips

If you're trying to conceive, ovulation test kits are an easy and affordable way to figure out exactly where you are in your cycle—in particular, how close you are to your fertile window, the point in a menstrual cycle when an egg can be fertilized. Ovulation tests use a small amount of urine to give you this information in the comfort of your own home, and they can be as simple as a test strip or as technologically advanced as an electronic device that connects to an app for full tracking ability. The type of test you use is entirely up to you, but we recommend choosing one that prioritizes accuracy, readability, and ease of use for the best experience. To help you figure out which test is right for your needs, we talked to several experts about how ovulation tests work, when to use them, and what to do with your results. Then, 10 of our editors tested 16 different tests at home to find the most reliable ones currently on the market. While doing so, two of us actually got pregnant! According to Katrina Heyrana, M.D., PhD, a specialist in obstetrics and gynecology at Cedars Sinai in Los Angeles, ovulation kits measure the amount of luteinizing hormone (LH) in your urine. LH surges sometime between 24 and 36 hours before ovulation, so detecting that rise can help you predict when you're most likely to be able to conceive. A positive ovulation test result is a signal to try to conceive for the next three days, says Dr. Heyrana, though ideally you should be trying for a couple of days before that positive result, too, if you want to really maximize your conception chances. Photo: Amazon \$10 at Amazon \$21 at Target \$17 at Walmart The Premom Easy@Home Ovulation Test Strips combine the simplicity of urine test strips with the more advanced fertility tracking of an app, offering the best of both worlds—and one of the most comprehensive ways to test for ovulation on our list. Our tester liked that she could plug her details (like the date of our last period and next expected ovulation) into the app for even more customized predictions. She said that the instructions were clear and interpreting readings was as easy as snapping a picture of the test strip and uploading it to the app. She also loved that the results came back in less than five minutes, and the LH surge it identified lined up with her other signs of ovulation. What's more, this kit is budget-friendly, providing 50 test strips for less than \$20. We also tested out the Premom Easy@Home Ovulation Test Strips and Pregnancy Test Strips Combo Kit and had the same stellar results; if you don't mind spending a bit more to score some extra pregnancy tests, we don't think you'll be disappointed. We would have loved to receive a reusable urine cup with this kit, and while the individual packaging around each test strip makes them extra portable, it also creates a lot of extra waste. The Details: Test type: Test strips Number of tests: 50Result time: 5 minutesApp: Yes Photo: Parents Photo: Parents Photo: Parents Photo: Amazon \$60 at Amazon \$41 \$32 at Target \$42 at Walmart This Bluetooth-connected ovulation test kit that relies heavily on app-compatibility may seem a little over-the-top, but it's hard to argue with how accurately and consistently it provides results. Our tester (who reports having pretty regular cycles) was surprised when the test showed no LH surge when she expected it to be—only to have the device detect the surge a few days later instead. And because it correctly captured her ovulation timing, she actually got pregnant that cycle! "I kept testing and ended up getting positive results, leading to peak fertility on day 18 of my cycle, about a week later than normal," she reported. "I ended up getting pregnant during that cycle and would have missed that later-than-expected ovulation had I not been using the strips." ClearBlue makes several other ovulation kits, including the Clearblue Fertility Monitor with Touchscreen and Clearblue Fertility Monitor Test Sticks and the Clearblue Advanced Digital Ovulation Test (both of which we tested for this article), but the Connected Ovulation Test was by far the most accurate, consistent, and easy to use of the three we tested. It came with plenty of test sticks and simple instructions, and the results were delivered quickly in an easy-to-interpret way. It's a bit pricey, yes—but if you're serious about getting pregnant, the digital advantages of this test are more than worth it. If you're a data-driven fertility tracker, you might be frustrated by the fact that the device doesn't give you any numerical results. You'll get an emoji to interpret based on whether or not you're approaching your fertile window. The device also prevents you from testing after you receive a peak fertility test until it's been 48 hours. The Details: Test type: Digital reader-Driven tests: 40Result time: 5 minutesApp: Yes Photo: Parents Photo: Parents Photo: Parents Photo: Amazon \$20 \$10 at Amazon \$15 at Walmart The Wondfo Ovulation Test Strips are a basic, no-nonsense way to test for ovulation without getting bogged down by technology. The fact that they gave our tester's results in 3–5 minutes makes them even more likable, honestly. The strips are also portable and provide easy-to-read results. You get 50 test strips in this kit, so it will last more than one cycle, increasing the overall value of the Wondfo test strips. In addition to the consistently fast results time, we also appreciated how nondescript the packaging was. Our tester noted that it didn't have any photos of babies or use any "mommy" language, which makes the product more appealing to a wider customer base. If you're tracking your ovulation for reasons other than trying to conceive, you won't feel alienated, uncomfortable, or stressed out by all the pink-and-blue, babies-everywhere marketing strategy. If you've never used ovulation test strips before, you might have a little trouble figuring out how to get started; there's not a lot of information in the instructions, which is good for getting down to business but not great if you have no idea what you're doing. The Details: Test type: Test strips Number of tests: 50Result time: 3–5 minutesApp: No Photo: Parents Photo: Parents Photo: Parents Photo: Parents Photo: Amazon \$20 \$16 at Amazon \$16 at Walmart View on Premom.com For ovulation testers looking for data, data, and more data, the Premom Quantitative Ovulation Predictor syncs up with the Premom app to tell you what your LH levels are, not just positive or negative results. In testing, we found that the app makes it easy to understand individual results and track ovulation over time in helpful charts, and the results were consistent, fast, and accurate. In fact, accuracy was one of the most notable features here. These test strips captured our tester's ovulation data correctly day after day, lining up with the other types of fertility tracking she was doing (and even outperforming one of those methods when she was sick and her temperature was abnormal). Between the accuracy, consistency, and clearly trackable data provided with the app, the Quantitative Ovulation Predictor kit is a detail-oriented user's dream. We weren't huge fans of the instructions: They were clear, but there was so much information in a very large pamphlet, it was hard to actually find the testing instructions and understand our results at first. The Details: Test type: Test strips Number of tests: 20Result time: 5–10 minutesApp: Yes Photo: Parents Photo: Parents Photo: Amazon \$13 \$9 at Amazon View on Mosiebaby.com \$21 at CVS Simple and direct instructions combined with quick, clear results make the Mosie Baby Ovulation Predictor Kit another of the favorites we tested. The ovulation kit comes with a large paper instruction sheet with organized directions, a chart indicating when to start testing based on individual cycle patterns, and helpful information about how the test works and what you should do for accurate results. The tests, themselves, look like plastic pregnancy tests, with long handles for gripping and positioning the test correctly in the urine stream. They also have a cap to place over the testing end, effectively eliminating any mess. The tests accurately predicted ovulation according to our tester's menstrual cycle, and she appreciated the clarity around interpreting the results. Each test has two windows, shaped for easy differentiation, with one functioning as a control window and the other as a results window displaying the LH level. In other words, our tester said there was no room for error and no way to wonder if the test was positive (or if you had taken it correctly in the first place). We also like that you have the option to pee directly onto the test or into a cup depending on your preference. We preferred collecting urine in a cup and then dipping the test stick inside—rather than trying to aim our pee onto the exact right section of the test—but the kit didn't include a reusable cup, which was the only thing we were missing, honestly. The Details: Test type: Test sticks-Number of tests: 7Result time: 3–5 minutesApp: No Photo: Parents Photo: Parents Photo: Parents Photo: Amazon \$33 at Amazon View on Proovtest.com There's an educational component to the Proov Predict & Confirm Kit that makes it stand out above the crowd when it comes to conceiving with irregular cycles, as is often the case for women with polycystic ovarian syndrome (PCOS). Using the app to take a photo of your test strip, the app will then use your results over time to create an "ovulation score," a numerical indication of how likely you are to be fertile and able to conceive. Our tester found this extra information pretty useful, especially since the app also told her when her two most fertile days were likely to be (not just that she was having a surge in LH). We like the modern, simple packaging of the Proov kit, the consistently fast and accurate results, and the addition of five pregnancy tests. We also tested the Proov Complete Testing System, but we thought it took too long to provide results and was pricey compared to the equally effective Predict & Confirm Kit. Overall, this was an easy and reliable kit, but there were a few details that could be improved to make the user experience smoother. For one, the app requires you to take the photo of the test strip during app usage, so you can't snap the photo and just upload it to the app later. Our tester was also kind of grossed out about how the kit only included one card for taking a photo of the test strip, which meant she had to keep using the same unsanitarily card over and over again. The Details: Test type: Test strips Number of tests: 15Result time: 10 minutesApp: Yes Photo: Parents Photo: Parents Photo: Parents Photo: Parents Photo: Amazon \$14 at Amazon View on Mommed.com There are no bells and whistles with the MomMed Ovulation Test Strips, but that's why we like this kit: The straightforward instructions were a breeze to follow, with plenty of information about when and how to test, as well as how to read the results, and the testing process itself was even easier. Our tester peed in the supplied collection cup, dipped a test strip in the urine, then waited less than five minutes to view her results. We're also big fans of the overall value of this kit: for less than \$14, you get 50 test strips, so you can test as many days in a row as you want to without feeling like you're wasting supplies or using up the kit too quickly. We really didn't have many issues with this testing kit, though occasionally the results were a little hard to read (and we might have gotten a few "dufs," or strips that didn't seem to return accurate results). The Details: Test type: Test strips Number of tests: 60Result time: 5–10 minutesApp: No Photo: Parents Photo: Parents Photo: Parents Photo: Ava Women The Ava Fertility Tracker is unlike any other ovulation test on this list because it's a wearable device that works by collecting your important data and vitals while you sleep. When synced with the app, it can deliver an accurate fertility window based on those vitals. The built-in technology allowed our tester to put the device on her wrist before bed and then do literally nothing else in order to track her fertility levels. It was comfortable to wear and required almost no effort, eliminating the whole "pee in a cup and interpret your own results" thing required with most other types of ovulation tests. When she woke up in the morning, our tester could sync the app and get instant information about her cycle, pulse, body temperature, breathing rate, sleep pattern, and heart rate. It was nice to get that extra data about her sleep and well-being, she shared, as it made her understand her cycle and how external factors like stress could affect it. This device is expensive (although we do consider it a worthwhile investment for serious fertility trackers), and there's definitely a learning curve. There's no on or off switch, so you have to remember to charge it a few hours before bedtime or it will run out, and forgetting to use it or incorrectly using it would mean missing an entire night's worth of tracking data. The Details: Test type: Wearable digital tracker-Number of tests: N/AResult time: Real-time dataApp: Yes Photo: Parents Photo: Parents Mira Hormone Monitor Max Kit: We loved how accurate and comprehensive our results were with this monitor kit, but it's a more expensive and high-tech method of tracking ovulation. The test results took more than 20 minutes to develop, and all the info gets put into the data-driven app for analysis. In other words, it's great for in-depth period tracking but not more casual use. Frida Fertility Ovulation + Pregnancy Test and Track Set: This is an inexpensive kit that might work well for beginners because it's so easy to use, but our tester was frustrated by all the packaging and pieces included, and only found it to be accurate about 75 percent of the time. Premgate Ovulation Test Strips: This kit was accurate and provided fast, easy-to-read results, but it was extremely messy to work with. It didn't come with any collection cups, and we had to get the just-right amount of urine for the test or it wouldn't work properly. Natalist Ovulation Test Kit: We weren't overly impressed by this test's sensitivity; it didn't detect all the LH surges we expected it to, making it potentially unreliable. We also didn't love the test strip tracker because it was hard to insert the strips, and there were only 14 slots (but 30 test strips provided in the box). We researched dozens of ovulation tests and talked to several experts before selecting the products to be included in our test, using what we had learned about how ovulation tests work and what types of information and results they provide to choose what we thought might be the most reliable tests on the market. We asked our testers to use their ovulation tests at home, beginning 10 to 14 days before their period was expected (or daily, if they have irregular periods), taking note of the following attributes during the testing: Accuracy: To evaluate the accuracy of the ovulation test, we considered how closely the ovulation kit's prediction of ovulation aligned with our typical signs and symptoms of ovulation. We also noted if the test failed to predict ovulation correctly. Ease of Use: Several features were tracked here, including how clear the instructions were, how easy it was to handle the packaging and test strips, and whether the results were easy to read and understand. Speed of Results: Most kits provide results in five to 10 minutes; we paid attention to how quickly our results were available, and weighed in on whether the waiting time for results was practical for daily testing. Consistency: Similar to accuracy, our testers noted whether the test kit's results aligned with their physical observation of ovulation signs and symptoms, and then took it one step further, evaluating if it continued to be accurate over multiple cycles as well as during times of stress, travel, and illness. Value: The average price of the ovulation kits we tested was \$20. For each test, we thought about how likely we would be to buy the test for its listed price, as well as whether we would continue to use the test on a regular basis or recommend it to others. Before selecting and trying out any ovulation test kits, we spoke to the following healthcare professionals to learn more about what to look for when shopping for a test, including accuracy, readability, cost, and more. Felice Gersh, M.D., an OB-GYN and founder and director of the Integrative Medical Group of Irvine, in Irvine, California, and the author of PCOS SOS Fertility Fast Track Kimberley Thornton, M.D., FACOG, assistant professor of reproductive endocrinology and infertility at Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai Katrina Heyrana, M.D., PhD, a specialist in obstetrics and gynecology at Cedars Sinai in Los Angeles Pinar Kodaman, M.D., PhD, associate professor of obstetrics, gynecology & reproductive sciences at Yale School of Medicine Sensitivity: Ovulation tests measure LH, or luteinizing hormone, to determine when that hormone is at its peak, when you're most likely ovulating and fertile. As for sensitivity levels, a test that detects a range of 20–50 IU/L (international units per liter) will typically capture the surge of LH. The usual range for LH levels is 1.9–13.6 IU/L, but when a person is fertile, that number can reach as high as 118 IU/L. The sensitivity level should be written on the test or in the description of the product online. Readability: From digital readers to test strips to fertility apps, ovulation tests come with many different result images, but some of them can be hard to read. Digital tests may have a smiley face, while strips will show you lines. More modern and tech-forward options allow you to scan your results through an app for ultra-clear results. Depending on your comfort level, you'll want to choose a test you feel confident reading. Additional tracking: You can also monitor your cervical mucus and basal body temperature chart, says Dr. Thornton, both of which tend to increase when you're ovulating and can confirm that it's happened. If you want to track this, Dr. Thornton suggests checking your temperature every morning at the same time before getting out of bed, and be sure to write it down (FYI, you can expect it to rise approximately 0.5 degrees Fahrenheit). Ovulation tests are generally safe to use, says Dr. Heyrana, since they test your urine in a non-invasive way. Still, for the most accuracy, make sure you're choosing an ovulation test that's not expired; just like with pregnancy tests, using an expired test can affect your results. You can test for ovulation at any time of the day, but experts suggest the morning for the best results. If your typical menstrual cycle is 28 days, you should start taking daily ovulation tests 10 or 14 days after starting your period. Why then? Because ovulation occurs 14 days prior to the onset of your period, says Dr. Gersh, so for people with 28-day cycles, it usually starts around the halfway point. If you have irregular cycles, Dr. Heyrana suggests testing daily once your period begins, since your ovulation timing will be harder to predict. If you're feeling particularly confident in your ability to detect your fertile window (maybe you're monitoring other signs of ovulation, like increased cervical mucus or libido), you can wait until a few days before your expected ovulation—but you should still test daily from that point on, says Dr. Kodaman, so you can verify the accuracy of the test kit by getting a few negative results before a positive one. You also don't want to accidentally miss out on detecting that LH surge! Lastly, there are no side effects associated with ovulation tests, but keep in mind that repeated testing may take an emotional toll: Dr. Kodaman says it can be anxiety-provoking trying to interpret your results, and that basing your sex life around ovulation tests can take some of the fun out of being intimate with your partner. It's not an exact science, but you can expect to ovulate about 12–24 hours after a positive ovulation test. There are six days in the month that are considered your most fertile days. This window, says Dr. Thornton, is the time frame when the viability of both eggs and sperm are the highest; although sperm can technically survive up to five days in the reproductive tract, they're the most viable in the 48 to 72 hours after intercourse. Meanwhile, a newly released egg can be fertilized for about 24 hours after ovulation. To put it simply? You don't necessarily have to have intercourse on the day of ovulation, but it does have to happen during the fertile window, says Dr. Thornton. For the most accurate results, wait until at least seven days after ovulation to ensure your hCG levels are high enough to give a positive test. However, this can also depend on your menstrual cycle because while most people ovulate 10 to 14 days before their menses, some are irregular. Technically, yes, ovulation tests can detect some of the hormonal changes associated with pregnancy, but they are meant to predict ovulation by measuring the rise in LH that happens about 24 to 36 hours before, and should only be used for that. Sarah Bradley is a health and parenting writer for Parents who lives in Connecticut with her husband and three sons. As a homeschooling mom who works part-time, she understands the value of shopping for parenting products that are not only safe and affordable but can be trusted to keep you and your family healthy. While the Mother&Baby ovulation calculator can work out when you're ovulating based on your last period, ovulation tests detect your most fertile window by using your urine or saliva. Brands like Clearblue lead the way on the market, with easy-to-use test kits that are able to identify four or more fertile days when you are ovulating to help you boost your chances of getting pregnant. Ovulation prediction kits (commonly referred to as an OPK) mainly come in the form of urine tests, but saliva test kits are also available (although sometimes less effective). Here's everything you need to know about how ovulation prediction kits work and which brands are the best value for money. Standard urine-based OPKs are priced between £10 and £15 per cycle. Most brands offer the same level of reliability, so definitely pick the one that offers you the most tests for the least amount of money. Salivary ferning OPKs can be better valued. After the initial cost of between £20 to £35 for the microscope, you should be able to use it again and again. However, if it takes you a long time to conceive, you might have to replace it after about two years. This pack comes with the option of 10 or 20 ovulation tests. These tests promise to accurately track your levels of two essential fertility hormones (estrogen and luteinizing hormone) and to identify additional high fertility days that no other test can. With a smiley face display, you can be unmistakably clear in your results and yes they are basic but they are very very accurate." Pinpointing your two most fertile days each cycle, with this test kit you'll be presented with an ultra-clear smiley face in the digital display when your LH surge has been detected, so you know the best two days to try for a baby. Reviewed by M&B tester Sarah: "Clearblue can do no wrong in my eyes when it comes to ovulation testing. They are so easy to use with such clear results that you know exactly where you stand. I do think I'd choose the Clearblue Advanced Digital Ovulation kit over this one, simply because it gives you four days but this would be my second choice for sure and is a slightly cheaper option too." Type: Urine-based OPK Number of tests: 20 Clear & Simple Ovulation Test Strips are the perfect way to help you know the best days for conception. These easy to use strips promise 99% accuracy and get the results in 10mins. One reviewer said: "Really easy to use and also reliable like other pregnancy test kits!" If you're thinking about having another baby, or maybe starting a family of your own, then being able to accurately predict ovulation is really important. Every woman is different, and even if your cycles are always on time, your fertile days are likely to change cycle to cycle, which is why this easy-to-use urine test will accurately detect those important days. When trying for a baby, it is important to keep an accurate track of your previous tests, as they are great indicators for your individual fertility periods, and with these strips it will certainly make your life easier. One reviewer said: "So, before buying this product, at first I was infertile and that I wasn't ovulating. But then it showed up that I was and I went to the doctors to check. Tracking my cycles and being able to look back. Love this." Wondfo Ultra Accurate Ovulation Test Strips can detect the LH (Luteinizing Hormone) level concentration in the range of 0–65mIU/ml. With quick results, you'll be able to measure low, high, and peak LH levels and calmly predict your ovulation days, even if your cycle length changes every month. One reviewer said: "There are clear and accurate. The wide enough so you hold it properly. Got my peak straight away before all other tests. Will buy again." Having sex consistently, a couple of times a week throughout your cycle, is the best way to increase your chances of pregnancy, but it is also extremely useful to be able to schedule sex when you know it is likely to make the most difference. This is where OPKs come in. Couples with busy lives often find regular sex difficult and it can sometimes feel like a chore, especially for those who have been trying for a while with no success. While you could chart your monthly cycles using the temperature method (tracking your temperature for patterns to predict ovulation), taking an over-the-counter test is a quick, easy, and reliable way to predict when ovulation is likely to occur. If you have irregular cycle length and potentially late ovulation, then OPKs are particularly useful. The test allows you to pinpoint your fertile window throughout the length of your menstrual every month and plan to have sex accordingly. This can often make these times more special, as you know your chances are maximised, improving your relationship and reducing the stress often associated with trying for a baby. Urine-based ovulation tests are the most common, they detect the LH surge in your urine, which signals when you are about to start ovulating. This is detected one or two days before ovulation. While a small amount of LH (luteinising hormone) already exists in urine, the amount increases by two to five times in the few days before ovulation, which is how the test can reliably identify your most fertile window. During this window, you are most likely to conceive. Salivary ferning kits are another type of OPK. These operate rather by monitoring the rise in your oestrogen levels both before and just after ovulation. You test your saliva with a tiny, portable microscope and if your oestrogen levels have risen, the salt content of your saliva increases. When the salt dries, it crystallises into a fern-like pattern, letting you know that you are now in your ovulation window. If you are not in your fertile window, the saliva will just dry in shapeless lumps. These are rather like pregnancy tests, simply wee on a stick and coloured bands will appear on the stick to indicate whether or not the LH surge is occurring. If you are using a digital OPK, they usually use symbols, such as a smiley face to let you know when you are on your most fertile days. Generally, you should try to collect your wee between 10am and 9pm. The recommended optimum time is between 2pm and 2.30pm. It is recommended that you try to collect your wee at about the same time every day, for added consistency, but this is not absolutely crucial. A few more tips - don't do the test as soon as you wake up, and try to reduce the amount of liquid you drink for about four hours before you do the test. Too much liquid could dilute your urine, which may make it more difficult to detect the LH increase. Afterwards, read the test results within 10 minutes and throw the test away once you've read it, as sometimes faintly coloured bands start appearing sometime after, which can deceive you about the result. Using a salivary ferning OPK is easier, simply place some of your saliva on the slide, either using your finger or licking it. Do this first thing in the morning, before you've had anything to eat or drink. Make sure you don't put too much saliva on it and that it is free of any air bubbles for the best result. Then, you wait for the saliva to dry and use the microscope to see whether there is any 'ferning' or not. You can compare your slide with examples in the instructions to see whether you are ovulating or not that day. With both types of OPK, the best time to start testing is on day 11 of your cycle and you can carry on for six days. Our ovulation calculator will help you with that. Although over-the-counter drugs like paracetamol won't affect the tests, those containing Human Chorionic Gonadotrophin (hCG) or LH can have an effect on your result. Equally, some fertility drugs can also affect the results, so make sure you check any medication before taking the test. Urine-based LH tests are 99% accurate at detecting ovulation. Salivary ferning tests aren't as accurate, as the process of ferning may happen at other times in your menstrual cycle, especially if you are taking fertility drugs. One thing to note is that if you have poor eyesight, salivary ferning kits may not be the best method to choose. Emily Gilbert is the Features & Reviews Editor for Mother&Baby and has written for the website and previously the magazine for six years. Specialising in product reviews, Emily is the first to know about all the exciting new releases in the parenting industry.