





Getting a Boost of Energy, Naturally

By Diana Gifford

Do you ever find yourself a little low on fuel, right when you could really use some? Men may discover they need a touch of help with their tiger, so to speak. But being low on steam could occur at less exciting moments too, like when walking up the stairs. I'm referring to instances when you expect your body to have the same vibrancy of youth, but it just doesn't anymore.

You can chalk it up to age, stress, or not enough sleep. And you can aim to get more sleep and eat a better diet. There's no denying that aging is a major factor, and there's nothing that can be done to stop that march. But don't forget, there are safe, natural remedies that can address a lack of energy.

One of the proven ones is nitric oxide, something that your body produces naturally to help your blood vessels relax and expand, improving circulation, and supporting the delivery of oxygen and nutrients throughout your system. As we age, our bodies produce less of it. A lot less. By the time you're 40 or 50, your nitric oxide levels may have dropped by half. That has ripple effects not just for heart health, but for stamina, recovery, even brain function.

If it's a dietary source of energy you want, then turn to beets. They are one of the few foods that directly increase the body's ability to produce nitric oxide. But not everyone wants to eat beets every day. And sometimes diet isn't the answer, especially if your system has trouble converting nutrients effectively.

Consider trying remedies you can find in natural health food stores. There are many products purporting to do what beets do, but few that have the credibility of Neo40. It's not a medication. It's nitric oxide in tablet form, containing a combination of beetroot powder, L-citrulline (an amino acid that supports nitric oxide production), and sodium nitrite (a form of nitric oxide). Putting a tablet of Neo40 on the tongue and letting it dissolve enables the body to replenish nitric oxide levels quickly.

It's amusing what scientists celebrate. They might forgive us for not following along. But in this case, you might be pleased to know that nitric oxide won the "Molecule of the Year" award in 1992. They brought out the big spotlights in 1998 when the Nobel Prize in Medicine was awarded to Robert Furchgott, Louis Ignarro, and Ferid Murad for their discovery that nitric oxide acts as a signaling molecule in the cardiovascular system. It was groundbreaking science because it revealed that this short-lived gas has an important role in communicating between cells and regulating blood flow. Knowing the role of nitric oxide, researchers soon found the pharmaceutical pathway to Viagra, which is not nitric oxide, but it functions in a similar way, enabling signals to blood vessels to stay dilated.

In taking up this column, I promised to cut through the noise with a clear-eyed view of what's actually working for people. Viagra is one of those things, but so too is Neo40. And a nitric oxide tablet has the benefit that it suits a wider set of purposes for men and women. I recommend having a look at the information online from both the company involved, called Humann, and even the critics of natural supplements. This is one of the ones that gets a thumbs up. It's a good product.

On a personal note, I witnessed first-hand its effectiveness. In the years after my father suffered a heart attack at the age of 74, he always had Neo40 on hand to help when he needed a boost.

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This column offers health and wellness, not medical advice. Visit www.docgiff.com to learn more. For comments, diana@docgiff.com. Follow on Instagram @diana_gifford_jones

Ontario Connecting More Families to Fertility Supports

Province supporting 25 new and expanded clinics

The Ontario government is taking action to help more families access fertility treatments by investing \$250 million to expand access to in vitro fertilization (IVF) under the Ontario Fertility Program (OFP). As part of the government's plan to protect Ontario by improving public services, the funding will support 25 clinics, including six new IVF clinics, to shorten waitlists for fertility services in both hospital and community settings.

"Our government is helping more people start and grow their families by increasing access and shortening wait times for fertility services," said Sylvia Jones, Deputy Premier and Minister of Health. "Our investment in these 25 clinics will help triple the number of families in Ontario benefiting from publicly funded fertility supports – further protecting public services."

Minister Jones made the announcement at Pollin Fertility Clinic in Toronto, a new clinic that integrates modern technology, patient-centred design and a multidisciplinary clinical team to help Ontarians access publicly funded IVF services.

"We are honoured to be included in Ontario's Fertility Program and thank Premier Ford and Minister Jones for their leadership," said Melody Adhami, CEO, Pollin Fertility. "This partnership will allow Pollin Fertility to expand access and help more families achieve their dream of having children, with an unwavering commitment to excellence and patient-centred care."

The below Toronto clinics are expected to collectively deliver approximately 2,250 IVF cycles as part of this investment and include:

- Pollin Fertility Clinic (new)
- Twig Fertility (new)
- Tripod Fertility (new)
- TRIO Fertility
- Generation Fertility Toronto West (formerly ReproMed Fertility)
- CRaTe Fertility Centre
- Mount Sinai Fertility
- Hannam Fertility Centre

Of the overall investment of \$250 million, \$50 million for 2025/26 is estimated to fund an additional 5,000 IVF cycles across the 25 new and expanded clinics. Additional clinic locations will be announced in the coming weeks and the remaining \$200 million investment will be allocated in 2026 to approved clinics for fiscal years 2026/27 and 2027/28.

Through Your Health: A Plan for Connected and Convenient Care, the Ontario government is making steady progress to ensure the OFP is better equipped to meet the needs of patients and provide them with timely and high-quality fertility care where and when they need it, closer to home.

With the OFP expansion, the program now funds 54 Ontario clinics that provide publicly funded fertility services, including intra-uterine insemination (IUI), IVF and fertility preservation. Since the launch of the OFP in 2015, funding has been provided to over 125,500 Ontarians to help them build their families.

The province will be requiring all publicly funded fertility clinics under the OFP to be accredited by Accreditation Canada's Qmentum Global program by April 1, 2028, ensuring consistent quality standards across the province.

The new refundable Ontario Fertility Treatment Tax Credit, starting in the 2025 tax year, builds on Ontario's existing Medical Expense Tax Credit, offering further financial relief to couples and individuals in their journeys to start or grow their family. The credit provides a maximum of \$5,000 in annual support by covering 25 per cent of eligible fertility-related expenses up to \$20,000. These expenses, include IVF cycles, fertility medications, travel for treatment and diagnostic testing and must be for goods and services provided entirely within Canada.

"Today's announcement by the Ontario Government to invest in Ontario's fertility services is a meaningful step forward for families in Eglinton–Lawrence and across the province. By expanding access to publicly funded fertility treatments and supporting clinics like the Pollin Fertility Clinic right here in our community, our government is helping more people start and grow their families. This is about reducing wait times, improving access to care and strengthening our health-care system for all Ontarians."

- Michelle Cooper
MPP for Eglinton–Lawrence

"Today's announcement expanding the number of clinics participating in the Ontario Fertility Program is an important step toward increasing access and shortening wait lists for patients seeking funded IVF services. For many individuals and couples, this brings renewed hope that building their family will be possible without the added burden of long waits or financial strain."

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