

Zest: Helping Parents-to-Be Optimize Their Health and Fertility with Functional Age Testing

June is Infertility Awareness Month: Dr. Julia Cooney highlights how functional age testing can support couples in their pre-conception journey

LONDON, MA, UNITED KINGDOM, June 26, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- As awareness grows around the importance of pre conception health, parents-to-be are increasingly seeking ways to optimize their bodies –

months, or even years, ahead of trying to conceive. [Zest](#), a longevity-focused biotech company, is supporting this journey with its [Functional Age Test](#) to help identify and improve health metrics related to fertility.



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“

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Dr. Julia Cooney, CEO & founder, Zest

A recent WHO survey of over 5000 people across the US and UK found that over half of adults of reproductive age report actively planning or changing their physical health behaviors before pregnancy(1), with many citing diet, exercise, and medical screening as top priorities. This is reflected in social media trends, with users on TikTok and Instagram Reels sharing content on everything from ovulation prediction kits to pre-conception health strategies for men.

Meanwhile, innovations in pre-conception care, such as health apps, social marketing campaigns, and reminders integrated into electronic health records, are gaining traction, highlighting a cultural shift toward proactive fertility preparation well before conception.

Optimizing your body before conception

This cultural shift is not without good reason, since recent research has highlighted the

increasing importance of optimizing the health of parents pre-conception. “More and more studies are showing that optimizing your body before conception has impacts beyond fertility and actually extends towards longer-term health benefits for the child's life,” says [Dr. Julia Cooney](#), medical doctor, CEO & founder of Zest. This was also reflected in recent research published in The Lancet showing that a mother's diet, weight, and lifestyle before conception can influence fetal development, increase or reduce the risk of childhood obesity, and shape a child's long-term risk of certain diseases(2). Scientists are also uncovering how sperm health plays a critical role in long-term childhood outcomes. Studies suggest that environmental factors such as diet, obesity, and stress can alter sperm at the epigenetic level, potentially leading to lasting changes in a child's health(3).



Zest's Functional Age Test can help identify and improve health metrics related to fertility

Functional Age Testing

One way in which Zest aims to support those looking to optimize their bodies ahead of conception is through Functional Age Testing. Unlike traditional check-ups, Functional Age Testing offers a comprehensive view of how well your brain and body are really functioning, revealing how fast you're aging biologically, and (crucially) what you can do to slow aging down. This health snapshot looks at key markers such as cholesterol levels (HDL, LDL), blood sugar and metabolic health, and inflammation (including hsCRP), all of which are closely linked to reproductive health and the likelihood of a successful pregnancy.

“By lowering functional age, we're essentially giving women more time, taking the pressure off and expanding their fertile window,” explains Dr. Cooney. While there is not yet direct evidence that lowering functional age improves egg or sperm quality, the core components that make up functional age, including cholesterol, glucose, and inflammatory markers, are well established as being closely linked to fertility. Research shows, for example, that women with diabetes or high cholesterol levels face significantly higher rates of infertility(4). By identifying and improving these key health metrics early, functional age testing offers a promising way to increase the likelihood of conception and potentially extend the fertile window for those looking to conceive later in life.

Better Pregnancy Outcomes and Healthier Babies

The benefits go well beyond conception as well. Maintaining healthy functional age markers throughout pregnancy, such as keeping triglycerides, glucose, and cholesterol levels in range, is associated with better pregnancy outcomes and healthier babies(5). Elevated triglycerides, for instance, have been linked to higher pregnancy risks and poor fetal growth. By optimizing these factors early, women can give themselves and their babies the best possible foundation for lifelong health."

Zest's Functional Age test empowers individuals with a personalized health snapshot and clear, evidence-based steps to slow aging and improve metabolic and cardiovascular health, essential factors in reproductive fitness. As pre-conception care becomes a priority for more couples, Zest offers a simple, accessible way to take charge of reproductive health well before trying to conceive.

About Zest

Zest is a longevity-focused healthtech company on a mission to make preventative health actionable, accessible, and personalized. Founded by medical doctor and biotechnology expert Dr. Julia Cooney, Zest empowers individuals to take control of their healthspan through cutting-edge digital tools rooted in clinical science. Zest's platform combines blood biomarkers with digital wearables data and functional testing to help users understand and improve their "Functional Age," a measure of general health across systems. By translating advanced research into everyday tools, Zest is helping people live longer, healthier, more independent lives.

Learn more: <https://www.zest.science/>

Sources:

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- (3) <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/38136621/>
- (4) <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0015028221001278>
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