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**MEDIA RELEASE – EMBARGOED UNTIL SEPTEMBER 1, 2016**

**FERTILITY WEEK INCLUDES IVF FOCUS FOR FIRST TIME**

First the first time, factors affecting IVF success will be a focus for Fertility Week, a national public health initiative held annually from September 1 - 7 to promote understanding of the ways in which people can increase their chances of getting pregnant and having a healthy baby.

The Fertility Week 2016 campaign will use the popular hashtag #7ways7days and will focus each day on different factors affecting a person's fertility and their chance of conceiving naturally or with IVF. Topics include issues like parental preconception health and age; weight and exercise; and vitamins and minerals.

"About one in six couples has difficulty becoming pregnant," said Louise Johnson, CEO of the Victorian Assisted Reproductive Treatment Authority (VARTA) and spokesperson for Your Fertility. "But for many of these couples, what often stands between them and having a healthy baby is understanding what changes they can make to increase their fertility and likelihood of getting pregnant."

"It is also not well understood that many of these fertility factors apply equally to a person's chance of having a successful pregnancy using IVF and that by changing their behaviours, an IVF patient can improve their chances of taking home a healthy baby."

The inclusion of an IVF focus in this year's Fertility Week campaign followed collaboration between Your Fertility and the Fertility Society of Australia's Pre-Conception Health Special Interest Group to develop a series of fertility fact sheets for people trying for a baby. These fact sheets, which cover a range of factors affecting fertility outcomes, will be officially launched at the FSA's annual conference, held this year between September 4 - 7 in Perth.

FSA Chairman, Professor Michael Chapman, welcomed the inclusion of IVF as part of this year's Fertility Week campaign focus. "It makes a huge difference if people are fully informed about the factors that can affect their chances of having a baby – both with IVF and with natural conception.



Campaigns like Fertility Week are very important in helping to increase public awareness of these issues.”

Starting on 1 September, the #7ways7days daily schedule of topics will be:

Sept 1: Timing of sex

Sept 2: STIs

Sept 3: Age

Sept 4: Parenting begins before conception (epigenetics)

Sept 5: Smoking, alcohol and caffeine

Sept 6: Weight and exercise

Sept 7: Vitamins and minerals

Your Fertility is a government-funded program provided by the Fertility Coalition (Victorian Assisted Reproductive Treatment Authority, Andrology Australia, Jean Hailes for Women’s Health and the Robinson Research Institute).

For more information about Fertility Week 2016 visit [www.yourfertility.org.au](http://www.yourfertility.org.au), where you will also find a full list of the new Your Fertility/FSA fertility facts sheets and other relevant information. Fact sheet topics include:

- Age and reproductive outcomes
- Effects of caffeine, alcohol and smoking on reproductive outcomes
- Parenting begins before conception
- The role of exercise in improving fertility, quality of life and emotional wellbeing
- Understanding ovulation and the fertile window
- Vitamin and mineral (micronutrient) supplements
- Weight and reproductive outcomes
- Sexually transmitted infections (STIs) and reproductive outcomes

## ENDS

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