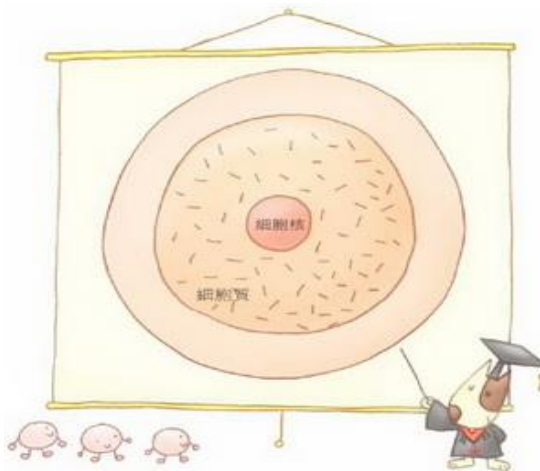
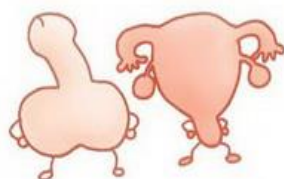




香港家庭計劃指導會
The Family Planning Association of Hong Kong



Origin of Birth - Ovum



Ovum, a woman's key contribution to the conception of her child, joins the sperm from the father and leads to the birth of a baby. How much do you know about ovum? Please try and answer the following questions!

- Which of the following punctuation has the shape most similar to the ovum's?
(a) comma (b) full stop (c) exclamation mark (d) brackets
- What is the diameter of an ovum?
(a) 0.001-0.002mm (b) 0.01-0.02 mm (c) 0.1-0.2 mm (d) 1-2 mm
- Females start to release ovum when they are:
(a) infants (b) children (c) adolescents (d) adults
- Which organ releases ovum?
(a) Ovaries (b) Uterine tubes (c) Uterus (d) Vagina
- How long does an ovum survive usually?
(a) about 1 hour (b) about 1 day
(c) about 1 week (d) about 1 month

A single sperm is the smallest cell in a male body, while the ovum is the biggest cell in a female body. The diameter of each ovum is 0.1 - 0.2 mm, almost 50 times larger than

the sperm, it is visible to the naked eye without the aid of a microscope!

The ova are sphere-structured, and are surrounded by follicle when they are immature.

To give a clearer picture, you may compare them to eggs we eat in meals! Eggs are the ova of chickens and their egg yolks are the egg cells. The ova inside women's body are much smaller than those in the chickens' but they both share similar shape. An ovum is largely made up of cytoplasm, with a nucleus in central, which stores genes from the mother. When it is joined with the sperm, a new cell will be formed with the joining of genes from both mother and father, which influence and direct the development and functioning of all the organs of a new life.

When do females start to produce ova? A female's entire stock of ova are formed in her two ovaries before her birth! Besides producing hormones, the ovaries also serve as a "factory" for production of ova. When a girl is born, she already has about one to two million ova stored inside her ovaries, and these ova will be matured at times of puberty. At puberty, the hormones make the ova ripened and be released from the ovaries. Usually, one ovum is released each month, from alternate ovaries. Such process lasts for about 30 - 40 year, and only about 400 of them are released by the ovaries during her fertile years. The rest will be gradually disintegrated inside the ovaries.

After ovulation, an ovum can only be fertilized for approximately one day, the ovum is drawn into the uterine tube, where it awaits fertilization by a sperm. When a sperm and ovum joins, it develops into a baby in the uterus. However, when fertilization does not take place, the ovum disintegrates, the lining of the uterus breaks down and females have a period.

Answers : 1.b 2.c 3.c 4.a 5.b