

Comment 5: Men whose semen characteristics fall below the lower limits given here are not necessarily infertile; their semen characteristics are below the reference range for recent fathers—as are, by definition, those of 5% of the fertile men who provided data used in the calculation of the reference range.

Comment 6: A man's semen characteristics need to be interpreted in conjunction with clinical information.

Comment 7: There may be regional differences in semen quality, or differences between laboratories; laboratories should consider preparing their own reference ranges, using the techniques described in this manual.

Comment 8: Time to pregnancy is also affected by the female partner's fertility status.

Table A1.1 Lower reference limits (5th centiles and their 95% confidence intervals) for semen characteristics

Parameter	Lower reference limit
Semen volume (ml)	1.5 (1.4–1.7)
Total sperm number (10 ⁶ per ejaculate)	39 (33–46)
Sperm concentration (10 ⁶ per ml)	15 (12–16)
Total motility (PR + NP, %)	40 (38–42)
Progressive motility (PR, %)	32 (31–34)
Vitality (live spermatozoa, %)	58 (55–63)
Sperm morphology (normal forms, %)	4 (3.0–4.0)
Other consensus threshold values	
pH	≥7.2
Peroxidase-positive leukocytes (10 ⁶ per ml)	<1.0
MAR test (motile spermatozoa with bound particles, %)	<50
Immunobead test (motile spermatozoa with bound beads, %)	<50
Seminal zinc (μmol/ejaculate)	≥2.4
Seminal fructose (μmol/ejaculate)	≥13
Seminal neutral glucosidase (mU/ejaculate)	≥20