

Beginning of Life

The main process of sexual reproduction is the joining of the

_____ and the _____. When

a female is born, she has already produced the number of eggs that she will have for her lifetime. These eggs are developed and released when she reaches **PUBERTY**.

Once the female reaches **MENOPAUSE** around the age of 45-55, this process stops, whereas males make sperm or sex cells throughout their lifetime. The production of sex cells occurs in males and females, which is a type of cell division, called **MEIOSIS**.

In this process, two sets of genetic instructions are made into one set. Every cell in our body contains **CHROMOSOMES** from the egg (from your mother) and the sperm (from your father). Each chromosome in our body is X-shaped (except for the sex cells, where they are **Y**-shaped, which are only found in males. In order to reproduce, each male and female must reduce the number of chromosomes in half in order to make a sex cell (sperm or egg.) This process is a random process (meaning a brother or sister may look and act totally different from you.)

Women are capable of having a child from puberty to menopause. In order to do this, she must have a _____.

Once the **SEMEN** enters the **VAGINA**, the sperm begins its process of fertilization- a

process that must be completed before the sperm die (**48-72 HOURS.**) After the sperm enters the vagina, it must cross the barrier of the CERVIX. If the woman has just _____, the barrier of the cervix will be **THIN AND WATERY**, making it possible for the sperm to pass through.

After the sperm travel through the **CERVICAL MUSCUS** they must travel up the uterus into the _____. Less than 1,000 out of **MILLIONS** of sperm in the semen reach the fallopian tubes. A multiple number of sperm will surround the egg in the fallopian tube, but only one will actually _____ the egg. All other sperm will then DIE. On occasion, the egg splits in half, causing monozygotic, or **IDENTICAL** twins. Sometimes two eggs are present, resulting in dizygotic, and or **FRATERNAL** twins. It is also possible to have more than 2 babies at once.

Once the egg becomes **FERTILIZED**, it is referred to as a _____. The zygote will get pushed along the fallopian tube and implant in the **UTERINE WALL**. The zygote will continue to **DEVELOP** in the uterus for NINE months, stretching the uterus to the size of a basketball. Finally, the baby will be _____.