

Sometimes conception precedes puberty. Numbers of women have become mothers before the smallest appearance of the menstrua: and some to whom this evacuation was never known have brought forth children. Instances of this occur in our own climate, without travelling for them to Brazil; where whole nations, we are told, are perpetuated without any woman being subject to the menstrual discharge; an evident proof, that it is not the substance of this discharge, but the seminal liquid of male and female which are essentially necessary to generation. It is also known that the cessation of the menses, which generally happens about the age of forty or fifty, does not always disqualify women from conceiving, and that some women have really become pregnant at the age of sixty or seventy. These examples, however frequent, may be considered as exceptions to the general rule; but they are sufficient to convince us that the menstrual blood is by no means the constituent principle of generation.

In the ordinary course of Nature women do not conceive before the menses appear, nor after they have ceased. The age at which
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