

How to Chart your Cycles and FAM Contraception



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About Me



- Naturopathic Doctor – graduate of Bastyr University, a 5 year medical school program in Seattle Washington
- Licensed as a PCP in CT, do consultations at Full Circle
- My business is:



Westchester Center for Natural Health

Homeopathic and Naturopathic Care for the Whole Family

- Specialize in natural medicine for women and pediatrics
- Mainstream medicine does not necessarily emphasize the importance of healthy habits during the first trimester. In fact it is of utmost importance.
- I believe that pregnancy and planning for pregnancy is the perfect window for making positive life changes

Fertility Awareness and Natural Family Planning



- Using fertility signs to time intercourse for either pregnancy achievement or pregnancy avoidance.
- The fertility signs that we chart are
 - Waking Basal Temperature
 - Cervical Fluid/Mucous
 - Cervical position/feeling
 - Other individualized signs

Basal Body Temperature



- Oral, Axillary or Vaginal
- Same time each day (every $\frac{1}{2}$ hour of sleeping in increases 1 tenth of a degree)
- After at least 3 consecutive hours of sleep
- Record your temp every morning on the chart
- *Note on if you have a fever: if it occurs after ovulation, it will not have an effect on ovulation*
- *If you have a fever around time of ovulation, ovulation may occur later (it may lengthen a cycle)*

Draw a Coverline to Show Thermal Shift



- To show a thermal shift in basal body temperature, you need to draw a coverline/baseline
- **FIRST:** record your BBT everyday
- Look for the day that your BBT is .2 degrees above any temperature in the last 6 days prior – this indicates a thermal shift and likely happens midcycle or at ovulation
- Of those 6 days prior to the day of the thermal shift, but not including the day of thermal shift, find the day with the highest temperature
- Draw the coverline .1 degree higher than that temperature.

Coverline Rules



- To avoid pregnancy – you are safe the third consecutive day your temp is above the coverline.
- If it falls below the coverline again, you have to wait until it rises above the coverline for 3 more days, then you will be safe.
- The coverline is not as critical for if you want to achieve pregnancy – but it is still a useful tool to show you when you have ovulated
- If your basal body temperature stays above the coverline it may show you that you are pregnant.

Looking at Cervical Mucous/Fluid



- Can be checked externally or internally, internally is better
- Externally – check discharge on underwear, when wiping from front to back, sometimes in the toilet bowl
- Internally – wash hands and perform a finger swipe at the cervix, can check several times a day. It may show up more after a bowel movement.
- If it is very thick, drink more water

Charting Cervical Fluid to find Peak Day



- There are dry days where you have no cervical mucous
- It can be many consistencies – thick, clumpy, watery, slippery, rubbery, yellow, sticky, eggwhite
- The most ‘wet’ quality cervical fluid – it may be slippery, or like eggwhite, have a stretch to it – is your most fertile cervical fluid.
- Charting your cervical fluid tells you your most fertile day: The last day you have a lubricative vaginal fluid/sensation is your **PEAK DAY**

Peak Day and Getting Pregnant



- Peak Day is the last day of 'wet' or slippery lubricative fluid
- Generally occurs 1-2 days before the temp shift
- You can only recognize it in retrospect, once you have a dry day.
- This is not necessarily the day of the most cervical fluid
- A Peak day can also be any midcycle spotting
- The key to getting pregnant is to have intercourse on the peak day, your most fertile day.
- If sperm count is normal, have sex every day of fertile cervical fluid, including the peak day. If it is low, consider having it every other day.
- You can also have sex through to the morning of your rise in temperature, since it is still possible an egg is still viable.

Cervical Fluid and avoiding pregnancy



- You are safe the evening of the 4th consecutive day after your peak day
- Before ovulation, you are safe on the evening of every dry day – ANY mucous at ANY time during constitutes a wet day.
- You are also safe the first 5 days of menstrual cycle (unless you have a 25 day cycle or shorter, then only the first 3 days are safe)

Cervical Signs



- When you finger sweep the cervix, you may notice a different sensation of the cervix.
- Before and After ovulation, the cervix tends to be low, closed, firm and dry (like the tip of a nose)
- At ovulation, the cervix tends to be open, soft and higher up/raised

You can also chart these signs to tell you when you are most fertile.

Let's Do some Examples



- See other handout.

Pre-Conception Health



- **Optimal Weight**
- **Taking a multivitamin – both the woman and man**
- **Gentle Detox – although should not detox when actively trying to get pregnant**
- **Avoid Toxins**
- **Clean up lifestyle, reduce alcohol, caffeine, eat whole foods, exercise, get good sleep, etc**
- **Get physical at the doctor, screen for anemia and vitamin D status**
- **Visit Me! For a constitutional homeopathy visit**

Fertility Enhancing Diet



- Organic as much as possible
- High in berries and colored veggies, and lots of greens – kale, spinach, broccoli, chard
- High in quality organic proteins
- Lots of essential fatty acids from nuts and seeds
- Avoid: caffeine, alcohol, non-organic dairy or meat, sugar, processed foods, trans-fatty acids
- Women's multi should have folic acid (400-800 mcg per day) and iron (18 mg per day)
- Men's multi should have zinc (10 mg per day), folic acid (5 mg per day), Vit C (100 mg per day), E (15 mg per day) and Selenium (55 mcg per day) - to increase sperm count.

Fertility Enhancing Herbs



- **These are non-toxic herbs which strengthen the body, they are called adaptogens**
 - Astragalus
 - Rhodiola
 - Withania/Ashwaganda
 - Holy Basil
- **There are also herbs that support ovulation**
 - Menses to ovulation: Medicago, Vitex, Mitchella
 - Ovulation to Menses: Dioscorea, Vitex, Smilax

With Vitex – it is vital to take it at the same time every morning.

Routine and Fertility



- Sleep routine is key for enhancing natural rhythms of the body. Go to bed and wake up same time every day.
- LUNACEPTION: start sleeping in total darkness when you start your cycle.
- After two days of wet cervical fluid, put a 40 watt bulb on in nearby room/hallway for the next three nights
- Return to total darkness after this
- Simulates the Full Moon – when ovulation is supposed to happen

More Information?



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