

THE LOVING CHOICE

ARCHDIOCESE OF DETROIT NATURAL FAMILY PLANNING NEWSLETTER

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NFP Cleveland Seminar

September 16, 2000

The topic of the seminar was "Back to Basics, Ovulation Method Update with Kay & Sue Ek". Kay is president of Billings Ovulation Method Association, BOMA-USA. Sue is a BOMA trainer.

The day was rich in information.

Here are a few highlights:

- ?? Official Billings Ovulation Method web site is www.woomb.org
- ?? Effectiveness of the Billings Ovulation Method from a recent study in Indonesia is 99.15%.
- ?? The presence or absence of cervical mucus at the vulva signals the woman's state of fertility and infertility. It takes only 5 mg of mucus to "feel" its presence; it takes 40 mg of mucus to "see" its presence
- ?? There is no need for an internal exam of the cervix when a woman becomes aware of the "sensation" of mucus.
- ?? Ovulation usually occurs on Peak Day, sometimes the day after. It is essential to identify Peak correctly.
- ?? **THINK IN PATTERNS!!**
Menstruation pattern, dry or basic infertile pattern, change to fertile pattern, change to infertile pattern, followed by menstruation starting another cycle of patterns. These patterns can be clearly identified after three cycles.
- ?? Women who experience difficulty in clearly identifying their cycle patterns should eliminate exposure to light during their primary sleeping hours to stabilize their patterns. (see p. 2)
- ?? Intercourse during menstruation may result in endometriosis.



Managing Fertility While Breastfeeding by Colleen Moscone

Reference: www.billingsmethod.com

Breastfeeding is the natural next step after nurturing a baby within the womb. There are many benefits to both the mother and child such as:

Benefits of Breast milk to Baby:

- ?? is readily available
- ?? comes at the correct temperature
- ?? protects against allergies/diseases
- ?? is nutritionally correct
- ?? is hygienic

Benefits of breastfeeding to Mother:

- ?? is convenient
- ?? helps uterus return to normal size
- ?? reduces incidences of premenopausal breast cancer
- ?? maintains temporary infertility

As a breastfeeding mother I have found the bonding time to be rewarding and it gives me a chance to relax which is a valuable commodity to any mother.

I chose the Billings Ovulation method to monitor my fertility because it is natural. With instruction and motivation, it is 99% effective in regulating births, without the negatives of contraceptive methods. It is free from drugs and devices and alerts a couple of their returning fertility. A period of infertility is associated with breastfeeding. However, this period of infertility is variable and depends on several factors. Returning fertility may result from: introduction of other fluids and solids in the baby's diet, stopping night feedings, illness of mother or baby, partial breastfeeding, stress and fatigue, sucking difficulties, weaning, and other unknown reasons.

By evaluating cervical mucus daily, a woman will be able to easily recognize infertile and fertile signs. During the infertile time there is a sensation of dryness or unchanging discharge. The appearance of blood or a change in mucus or sensation alerts a woman to the possibility of returning fertility. When fertility returns a mother may continue to nurse while using this totally natural method. The Billings Ovulation Method is a couple method, as is parenting.

If you have any questions consult your Billings Ovulation Method teacher.

Light and Darkness During Sleep Affect A Woman's Fertility and Infertility

It is known that there are many things that affect a woman's cycle. Stress, exercise, and diet as well as medical circumstances come first to mind when understanding why a woman experiences many days of infertile and fertile mucus.

Mrs. Joy DeFelice, R.N., B.S.N. P.H.N. in her publication, "The Effects of Light On the Menstrual Cycle: Also Infertility", 1996, encourages users of natural family planning to consider the effects of light on the menstrual cycle. After adjusting light and darkness during sleep many women can identify clear patterns of fertility and infertility in their cycle.

Mrs. DeFelice proposes that the pineal gland responds to artificial and natural light resulting in the production of melatonin which is stored in the hypothalamus gland, which controls the menstrual cycle hormones. Mrs. DeFelice writes, "When the 24-hour rhythmic level of melatonin is lost due to the presence of abnormal levels of light at night, **both the normal progression of hormonal events within the menstrual cycle and the normal circulating levels of each reproductive hormone can become disrupted.**"

Women need a sufficient balance between light and darkness for the normal process of fertility to occur. Mrs. DeFelice has been able to help women regulate this balance so that their cycles develop a clear pattern of fertility and infertility and pregnancy can be more easily avoided or achieved and bleeding during early pregnancy can be stopped.

Women experiencing any of the following circumstances that have not responded to other treatments may benefit from altering their exposure to light and darkness during sleep.

Cycles lengths

- ?? cycle length variation of more than 8 days
- ?? cycle lengths less than 25 days or more than 35 days
- ?? very irregular cycles

Menstruation

- ?? light/heavy menstrual flow of less or more than 5-6 days
- ?? prolonged spotting
- ?? abnormal color
- ?? menstruation that stops and starts again
- ?? menstruation that may stop altogether
- ?? fertile mucus with menstruation

Time between menstruation and the beginning of fertility

- ?? days of little or no dryness for longer than 3-5 days

Fertile phase of the cycle

- ?? mucus in small amounts or of poor quality
- ?? mucus that is difficult to describe
- ?? patches of mucus
- ?? mucus that has both fertile and infertile signs
- ?? fertile mucus lasting 10-14 days before Peak
- ?? ovulation that does not occur
- ?? ovulation not coinciding with Peak
- ?? bleeding at times in the cycle other than menstruation

Luteal phase

- ?? days from Peak to menstruation are less than 10 days

?? an abnormal discharge after Peak

Special circumstances

- ?? difficulty achieving a pregnancy
- ?? bleeding, cramping or pressure in early pregnancy
- ?? fluctuating mucus patterns during nursing
- ?? increased pre-menopausal symptoms

Basal body temperature

- ?? abnormal temperature pattern
- ?? erratic pre-ovulatory pattern
- ?? baseline difficult to establish
- ?? baseline abnormally high
- ?? sustained temperature shift
 - ?? is delayed in the cycle
 - ?? does not coincide with fertile mucus
 - ?? does not occur
 - ?? lasts less than 9-10 consecutive days
 - ?? is erratic or weak
 - ?? has pronounced dips in temperatures

Mrs. DeFelice explains that each woman needs to determine the level of darkness during sleep best suited for stability of her hormones. Some women require a high level of darkness while others require a low level of light. Therefore, it is necessary to eliminate sources of light until a woman "feels comfortable". The room need not be dark as a dungeon.

Until the woman's hormones adjust to the changes in darkness she may experience confusing patterns with her mucus. Before evaluating the effectiveness of darkness for an individual woman "**three consecutive cycles**" (six cycles after childbirth, trying to achieve pregnancy or coming off the pill) in a "sufficiently dark" environment need to be experienced.

A room is "sufficiently dark" if after at least 15 minutes furniture and objects on the furniture or in the room cannot be identified. In order to arrange a sleeping area "sufficiently dark", consider eliminating light sources such as:

- ?? illuminated/digital clocks, phone machines...
- ?? lights, nightlight, wall switch, nursery monitor light...
- ?? control light from electric blanket, waterbed, heat pad...
- ?? TV, VCR, stereo, humidifier...
- ?? electric heater, wood stove, fireplace...

Protect the sleeping area from lighted areas such as:

- ?? bathroom, child's room, hallway....
- ?? porch, street, motion lights, bug lights, neon lights
- ?? sunlight, reflection from snow, water, mirror...
- ?? thin shades, see through curtains, skylights, glass door...

"Also, **bright** early morning light **SHOULD NOT** enter the sleeping area before 6:30 – 7:00 A.M. (unless you usually get up near sunrise but also go to bed early.)"

Individuals interested in darkening their sleep area are encouraged to contact their natural family planning teacher for assistance or call the Office for Family & Youth 313-237-5892.

mailing bar code
Name
Address
City, State, Zip

If your mailing label is marked
with a red asterisk (*) next to your name,
THANK YOU for your response.

The red asterisk next to your name means that you are on the updated TLC mailing list.

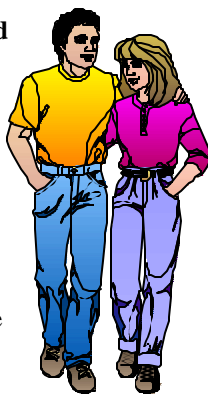
Otherwise, this is your *last issue* of TLC. If you wish to continue receiving this natural family planning support newsletter free of charge, write to the Office for Family and Youth – NFP, 305 Michigan Avenue, Detroit, MI 48226, or leave a message at 313-237-4679, or e-mail stapel.dorothy@aod.org to confirm or update the information on your mailing label.

The TLC newsletter remains free of charge. It is published by volunteers. However, there are costs involved like printing, mailing, and research information for the newsletter. A tax deductible donation toward these expenses is greatly appreciated. A letter for tax purposes will be sent to acknowledge your donation. Please write checks out to Office for Family and Youth – NFP.

Conjugal Love and NFP Presentation

The Archdiocese of Detroit offers this presentation monthly at locations throughout the archdiocese. Please advertise these in your church paper.

Feb 8, St. Alfred, Taylor
Mar 7, Queen of Peace, Harper Wds.
Apr 5, St. Theodore, Westland
May 9, Sacred Heart Seminary, Det.



During the presentation an overview of the Ovulation Method and Sympto-Thermal Method of natural family planning (NFP) is given in addition to Catholic Church teaching on marriage, and conjugal love addressing advantages, challenges, and rewards of NFP in marriage.

Material distributed during the presentation include a booklet on NFP, reference to Church documents and the Catechism of the Catholic Church on marriage and NFP, brochures on NFP, and an audio tape titled, "Contraception, Why Not?" by Dr. Janet Smith, Ph. D.

To register call 313-237-4679

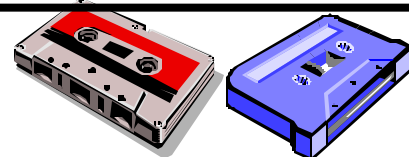
Fee for the presentation is \$20 a couple. Leave your name, wedding date, phone number, date, and location of presentation you plan to attend.

Managing Menopause Naturally by Colleen Moscone

Reference: www.billingsmethod.com

Menopause is the natural end of menstruation. It is a time in which a woman's hormonal levels are changing as the body prepares to end its reproductive capacity. This loss of fertility usually happens over the course of 5 to 10 years. During this phase of life, a woman may experience a number of symptoms, including breast tenderness, dryness of vagina, urinary irritability, irregular cycles and bleeding, hot flashes, weight gain, anemia, tiredness and irritability. Many physicians will prescribe Hormone Replacement Therapy (HRT).

There are natural alternatives to HRT, such as: proper diet, exercise, rest, sympathetic counseling, knowledge and understanding. Following a proper diet, rich in calcium (supplemented with calcium tablets), and vitamin C will help maintain strong bones. Exercise that includes weight bearing and postural routines will promote healthy bones. Rest, Sympathetic counseling, knowledge and understanding of menopause will reduce stress, and anxiety of everyday problems, so not to heighten symptoms. Women should be aware of the benefits and side effects of each method used to treat menopausal symptoms to enable them to make the best decision.



Last Minute Gifts for Priests, doctors... on your shopping list

Professionals as well as the average person today have very busy schedules. There's no time to read that "good" book or even watch a video. The answer – a cassette tape that can be put into the car while on the go!

Priests, doctors... who never have time to sit and talk can get your message about natural family planning by giving them a tape. This gift received from a parishioner, patient... has an excellent chance of being played and heard.

Two excellent tapes are:

"NFP: The Medical Link: Personal, and professional reasons why 20 physicians choose to prescribe only Natural Family Planning". Cost is \$5 plus postage. Call 800-864-6225 or write Office of NFP, 316 North 7th Avenue, St. Cloud, MN, 56303-3631 or e-mail sek@gw.stcdio.org.

"Contraception Why Not?" By Janet Smith Ph. D. Cost is \$5 Call 800-307-7685 or write One More Soul, 616 Five Oaks Ave, Dayton, OH 45406 or e-mail omsoul@juno.com

