

Forms of NFP (Natural Family Planning)

There are two basic forms of Natural Family Planning (NFP).

The oldest form of NFP is ecological breastfeeding.

It is still widely practiced in certain parts of the world, and it is *making a comeback in the United States*. The key factor of ecological breastfeeding is frequent suckling. It requires no fertility awareness nor periodic abstinence. The term "ecological breastfeeding" was developed to sharply distinguish this form of baby care from "cultural breastfeeding" which provides little or no natural infertility.

The second form of Natural Family Planning is Systematic NFP and is based on daily fertility awareness.

It can be used both to achieve and to avoid or postpone pregnancy. When used to avoid pregnancy, the basic "method" is abstinence from the marital embrace during the fertile time, which is mainly checked by daily basal temperature readings and secretions.

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Natural Family Planning

Physicians for Life

Most adult women in the world know that they can become pregnant for only a few days each month, generally about mid-cycle for women who are regular in their cycle. NFP is a body of knowledge based on naturally occurring signs and symptoms, that teaches women how to identify these days. The modern methods can identify the fertile time even in women who are irregular and amenorrheic (related to the suppression of normal menstrual flow for any reason other than pregnancy).

Natural Family Planning (NFP) refers to the practice of avoiding or achieving pregnancy according to an informed awareness of a woman's fertility.

It can also refer to the spacing of pregnancies through ecological breastfeeding.

During each monthly cycle, a woman normally becomes fertile and then infertile. Her body provides certain signs to indicate her fertile and infertile times.

Natural Family Planning's Sympto-Thermal method teaches how to observe and interpret these signs... enabling couples to achieve or avoid pregnancy naturally...by becoming aware

of the woman's natural metabolic fertility cycle.

The Sympto-Thermal method is NOT Calendar Rhythm!

It was developed by leading obstetrician/gynecologists and further refined by the Couple to Couple League. With this method, a woman observes two or three fertility signs which occur naturally within her monthly cycle. As the signs are observed and recorded, her fertile and infertile times are determined.

The two most commonly used signs of fertility are:

a woman's normal cervical mucus secretions and...

her waking temperature.

A third and optional sign is the physical change that occurs in her cervix.

It takes just five minutes each morning for a woman to take her waking temperature. Then during the day she takes a moment now and then to become aware of her cervical mucus. Once the information is recorded, she has a complete and cross-checking picture of her fertility . . .

A number of studies have shown that the Sympto-Thermal Method of NFP can be used at the 99% level of effectiveness for avoiding pregnancy. That's equal to the birth control pill and better than all the barrier methods.

For a much broader look at NFP, go to www.cli.org

NATURAL FAMILY PLANNING VERY "EFFECTIVE"

Researchers from the *University of Heidelberg* studied 900 women. They report in the journal, *Human Reproduction*, that the correct use of Sympto-Thermal Method, STM, leads to a rate of 0.4 pregnancies per 100 women per year.

They compared this to a consistent, skillful use of a barrier method such as a fresh condom, which had a pregnancy rate of 0.6. Sex without contraception, during the fertile period, had a pregnancy rate of upwards from 7.5 pregnancies; however, many studies have found considerably higher percentages.

The Couple to Couple League, which teaches Natural Family Planning to married and engaged couples, said that "natural" and "contraception" are at "total opposite ends of the spectrum".

NFP is really Fertility Awareness, and can be used to increase the chances of conceiving or temporarily delaying pregnancy.

Advantages of Natural Family Planning Medically Safe

Because NFP is 100% natural, there are no health risks. No potentially harmful drugs or

devices. On the other hand, the Pill sometimes causes blood clots which can result in strokes, visual impairment, or death. According to Planned Parenthood figures, more American women die each year from the Pill than from the complications of pregnancy and childbirth (Making Choices, 1983). The Pill may act as an early abortion agent in some cases because its effect on the lining of the uterus prevents implantation.

Increased Health Awareness

Because NFP teaches you to become aware of your normal fertility pattern, changes in this pattern can alert you to medical problems.

Effectiveness

As mentioned earlier, the Sympto-Thermal Method of NFP is highly effective both for avoiding and achieving pregnancy.

Low Cost

NFP costs significantly less than other forms of birth control. Once you learn it, there are no continuing costs.

More Satisfying Marriages

Most couples report that NFP has a positive effect on their marriages. They find that periodic abstinence helps keep their sexual relationship fresh, improves their communication, and gives them a deeper respect for each other.

Immediately Reversible

You just change your timing. There's no damage to your fertility from drugs and medical procedures.