

## Potential risks:

No health risks.

### How can you learn about FAB?

Call your local public health or family planning clinic for information and referrals. It is recommended that anyone interested in using this method take a course taught by a Certified Fertility Awareness Instructor.

Information about fertility awareness-based methods is available on the Internet. Type words such as “fertility awareness” or “natural family planning” into any search engine (e.g., Google). Fertility monitoring products can be found in drug stores or by visiting the website [www.birth-control.com](http://www.birth-control.com). You can also learn more about CycleBeads® and the SDM by visiting [www.cyclebeads.com](http://www.cyclebeads.com).

**Center for Health Training**  
1809 Seventh Avenue, Suite 400  
Seattle, WA 98101-1341

206.447.9538 - p  
206.447.9539 - f

[seattle@jba-cht.com](mailto:seattle@jba-cht.com)  
[www.centerforhealthtraining.org](http://www.centerforhealthtraining.org)

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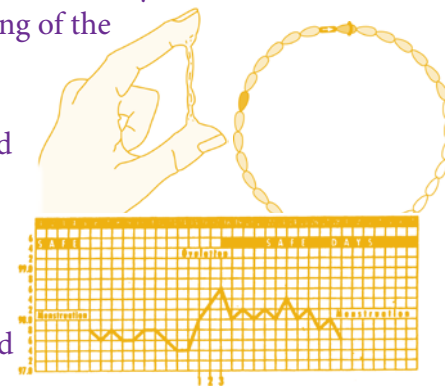
# Fertility Awareness-Based (FAB) Methods

## What are FAB Methods?

The Fertility Awareness-Based (FAB) Methods depend on identifying your fertile time each month. Signs of fertility include both cervical fluid (secretions or vaginal discharge) and waking body temperature.

## There are several FAB Methods:

- Standard Days Method (SDM) using CycleBeads®: SDM is based on statistical information about women who have regular menstrual cycles, and can be used by women who have cycles between 26 and 32 days long. Counting from the first day of your period, you consider days 8 through 19 in your cycle as fertile days.
- Ovulation Method: You observe and chart your cervical fluid (secretions from the opening of the uterus).
- Symptothermal Method: You observe and record cervical fluid as well as changes in your basal body temperature (BBT).
- Calendar Rhythm Method (CRM): You count and record days in each menstrual cycle and predict your fertile days (when you could get pregnant).



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To be successful with these methods, you should have basic knowledge about the physiology of fertility.

## How do you use FAB?

FAB methods can be used to plan a pregnancy or prevent a pregnancy. As you become more familiar with the signs of ovulation and the pattern of your menstrual cycle, you can plan sexual activity to avoid or plan a pregnancy.

During the fertile time, couples can either use a barrier method or not have intercourse to avoid pregnancy. Women (or couples) use a menstrual chart to record fertility signs (cervical fluid, BBT and first day of menses). With CycleBeads®, a woman moves a marker around a circle of beads, keeping track of her fertile days and cycle length.

A menstrual cycle is counted from the first day of bleeding in one month to the first day of bleeding the next month (usually 23-35 days). You must check and write down the specific signs of fertility every day of your menstrual cycle to learn when you are fertile.

## Basal Body Temperature (BBT):

BBT is your body temperature at rest (baseline). You take your temperature each morning before you get out of bed. Your BBT rises within 12 hours of your monthly ovulation. After your temperature has been higher for three continuous days (following 6 days of lower temperatures) you may assume your fertility period has ended for that cycle.

## Cervical mucus:

Your cervical fluid (mucus or vaginal discharge) changes throughout each menstrual cycle. Right after your menstrual period you

may have no fluid (“dry” days). As ovulation approaches, the fluid becomes sticky, creamy, and stretchy (like egg white). These fluid changes are related to fertility and are very important to learn in order to use this method effectively.

## Effectiveness:

Because of the various approaches to fertility awareness-based methods the effectiveness varies. These methods can be highly effective if the instructions are followed carefully for each and every menstrual cycle, as high as 96% effective. If instructions are not followed the chance of pregnancy goes up. Fertility products are available to help you keep track of the changing signs of fertility.

## Benefits of FAB:

These methods have no health risks or side effects. They can increase your awareness and understanding of your body. They can be used as birth control, and then provide very helpful information for planning a pregnancy. Couples may develop greater communication, cooperation and responsibility using these methods. They are acceptable methods for some women and couples with religious concerns about other birth control.

## Potential side effects or disadvantages:

Learning these methods takes time and practice. Using these methods consistently takes commitment, calculation, planning and cooperation between a woman and her partner.

FAB does not protect you against HIV (AIDS) or sexually transmitted infections (STIs) such as chlamydia, gonorrhea, herpes, genital warts (HPV), hepatitis B or syphilis.