

Benefits of FAMs:

Reliable

- Over 99% effective when used correctly
- Science-based, can be used throughout woman's life

Natural

- Respects the natural fertility cycle
- Has no harmful side effects
- Does not depend on cycle length or regularity

Enriches Marriage and Renews Intimacy

- Fosters admiration and respect for each other
- Periods of abstinence build commitment and enhance anticipation

Empowering

- In each cycle, spouses can make a joint decision about conceiving or avoiding pregnancy
- Improves your chances of getting pregnant when you want to
- Both spouses can be involved in the interpretation of fertility signs

In Unity with Catholic Church Teaching

- Promotes chastity and respects God's work of creation and His plan for marriage
- Total gift of self; respects integrity of intercourse and its life-giving potential

References

1. Frank-Herman, 'The effectiveness of fertility based methods...', Human Reproduction 2007
2. Gnoth 'Time to pregnancy..', Human Reproduction 2003
3. Vande, Couples' views of the effects of NFP..., J Nurs Scholarsh
4. Pope Paul VI, Humanae Vitae, 1968
5. <http://monographs.iarc.fr/ENG/Monographs/vol100A/mono100A-19.pdf>
6. Casey, 'Oral contraceptive...', Mayo Clin Proc 2008
7. Poulter, 'Risk of fatal pulmonary embolism...', Lancet 2000

I use fertility methods because I am a grown woman and I like to know what's going on with my body.

It is a way for me to show appreciation for my wife and her fertility. Periodic abstinence can be challenging, but it encourages us to find other ways to express our affection as a couple.

Our lovemaking had become a very mechanical experience. Birth control had taken the mystery out of the most intimate part of our being. When we freed ourselves from contraceptives, it was the beginning of a lifelong honeymoon.

Contact us

If you would like to learn about Fertility Awareness Methods please contact us at fam.eastanglia@yahoo.com
<https://www.rcdea.org.uk/fertility-awareness-methods/>

Call for teachers! – if you would like to volunteer in the diocese as a FAM teacher please let us know.



the DIOCESE of
EAST ANGLIA

Looking for a natural and effective way to plan your family?



Fertility Awareness Methods ...

... are the practices of observing a woman's signs of fertility and interpreting them to determine her fertile and infertile days. This information can be used to achieve or postpone pregnancy, and is highly effective, even with irregular cycles and during the period of post-pregnancy or pre-menopause.

SCIENCE-BASED

Those modern, science-based methods rely on observing external signs which reflect exactly what is going on inside your body. They are 99% effective in avoiding pregnancy when used correctly.¹ In addition, they can help achieve pregnancy since they enable couples to identify their fertile window. It has been reported that amongst those using FAM and trying to conceive 80% will achieve pregnancy within 6 months.²

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SUITABLE FOR EVERYONE

FAMs are easy to learn and in-expensive - there may be an initial cost for learning the method and materials. They can be used at every stage of a woman's life and do not require her to have a regular cycle; they can be used when breastfeeding or nearing menopause. Moreover, FAM methods help monitor reproductive health and can help detect cycle abnormalities (eg short luteal phase).

THE DIFFERENT METHODS

There are a few different methods designed to meet individual needs and preferences. They fall into 3 broad categories:

• MUCUS ONLY METHODS

These are based on cervical mucus observation, and include Billings and Creighton

• SYMPTO-HORMONAL METHODS

These use a combination of fertility monitors and mucus observations. Marquette is the best known of these.

• SYMPTO-THERMAL METHODS (STM)

These use cervical mucus observations, basal body temperature measurements and cervix signs. Couple to Couple League(CCL) and Natural Family Planning International use the STM

NB: FAMs *do not* include withdrawal nor the Calendar/Rhythm method developed in 1930's. The latter is based on calculations only and does not rely on observing and interpreting signs of fertility.

HEALTHY & NATURAL

FAMs do not alter the natural functioning of the reproductive system. They have no harmful side effects unlike some hormonal contraceptives which are included in the World Health Organisation carcinogens list and can increase a woman's risk for blood clots, breast and cervical cancer^{5,6,7}



STRENGTHENS THE MARITAL BOND

- Shared responsibility in planning to achieve/postpone pregnancy.
- Improved communication in planning your family.
- Fresh appreciation of fertility and its place as part of the total gift of yourself in marriage.
- Enhances appreciation of intimacy. Periods of abstinence can be challenging, but can increase self-discipline and enhance excitement and anticipation³.



RESPECT YOUR DIGNITY

FAMs are NOT the same as contraception! Marital intimacy always remains open to life – nothing disturbs the integrity of the sexual act. Respecting naturally occurring cycles, couples adjust their behaviour and cooperate with God's given gift of fertility. FAMs are promoted by the Catholic Church because they agree with God's work of creation and His plan for marriage⁴.