

Fertility 101

The Menstrual Cycle

For a 28 day menstrual cycle,

Cycle Day 1: The first day of your menstrual period

Cycle Day 5: Estrogen levels start to increase and cause the lining to grow

Cycle Day 14: An egg is released from the ovary and moves into the fallopian tubes (ovulation), then progesterone levels begin to increase

Cycle Day 28: If the egg is not fertilized, progesterone levels decrease and the endometrium is shed (menstruation)

If your menstrual cycle is not 28 days, your **ovulation should be 14 days before menstruation.**

Ex. 30 day cycle, ovulation should be day 16

Ovulation

Can be tracked by ovulation predictor kits (OPKs), basal body temperature, or cervical mucus.

OPK

Check your urine with one test strip daily starting a few days before you should be ovulating. When you get a positive, you are about to ovulate.

Basal Body Temperature

You should check your temperature every morning before getting out of bed with a thermometer made for this purpose (to the tenth of a degree). Log the result. Your temperature will go up 24-48 hours after you ovulate.

Cervical Mucus

Increasing estrogen levels cause the vagina to produce mucus (Day 5). This mucus will increase in volume and become thicker in the first half of your cycle. Just before ovulation, the mucus becomes clear, slippery, and stretchy (raw egg white). After ovulation, the increase in progesterone make the mucus decrease and become very dense.

When to have sex

Sperm can live inside the vagina for up to five days.

An egg's lifespan is 12-24 hours.

Have sex once a day from anytime during the 5 days before ovulation until 1 day after ovulation.

Period induction

This can be done with birth control pills or progesterone only pills. The end of the pills will cause a progesterone withdrawal leading to a period. The first day of bleeding will be your Cycle Day 1.

How to use Fertility Medication

Cycle Day 1: first day of bleeding

Cycle Day 3 – 7: take Femara once daily

Cycle Day 11: start checking one OPK daily until positive OR cycle day 20

 If you have a positive OPK, have sex

 If you get to cycle day 20, call the office

14 days after your positive OPK you should have a positive pregnancy test or start your cycle again.

Tracking

Keep a calendar of your periods, positive OPKs, and intercourse.

There are many apps for this or you can write it on a printed calendar.