

New Hope for Infertility

Are you longing for a child? Have you tried to conceive for a year or longer? About 12% of women today experience heartbreaking problems with conceiving or carrying a child full term. Many people are unaware that natural family planning may help you overcome the roadblocks to conception, identify underlying causes of the problem, and work with specially trained physicians, if necessary, to use medical and surgical treatments that work cooperatively with your fertility.

NATURAL FAMILY PLANNING

The **Ovulation Method of Natural Family Planning** relies on the observation of natural signs of fertility that occur during the woman's monthly cycle. Couples are taught how to make appropriate observations and how to chart those observations with a standardized recording system that enhances the couples' ability to identify their time of peak fertility within each cycle. The method is easy to learn and to follow. This is not the rhythm method; temperature is not involved.

FERTILITY CHARTING

When a woman charts her fertility, she records a description of her observations for each day and, also, places the appropriately colored stamp on her chart indicating where she is at in her monthly and fertility cycles. She begins each cycle charting with red stamps for menstruation. This can be followed with plain green stamps for the absence of any signs of fertility. When she begins to observe fertile signs, these are replaced with white baby stamps, and she writes in a description each day of the progressive changes in her fertility signs as she approaches ovulation. Following the cessation of her fertile signs, the woman completes her monthly charting with plain green stamps until her next menstrual period.

This represents a complete monthly cycle of fertility charting and provides an important means of monitoring a woman's gynecological and reproductive health. Fertility charting is foundational for a couple's success in conceiving and carrying a child full term, because it helps the couple identify their time of peak fertility, and it assists in the evaluation and treatment of any underlying conditions that are contributing to their difficulties.

THE TIME OF PEAK FERTILITY

Many women with infertility or subfertility concerns find, when charting, that their fertility cycle may be absent or very short. With the help of your natural family planning instructor, you will be able to interpret your individual time of peak fertility. Women, for instance, who are missing fertility signs in one menstrual cycle, may find that they may have limited, but adequate, signs in a different cycle. Or they may find that they are fertile for only one day out of a monthly cycle. When a woman's time of personal peak fertility is used to conceive a child, the effectiveness rate ranges from 20-40%, without any medical assistance. This comes solely from an understanding of the woman's fertility cycle itself.

PARTNER WITH A PHYSICIAN

In addition to providing information on your time of peak fertility, fertility charting also gives a woman invaluable information on the length of her menstrual cycle from the beginning of her menstrual flow up to the time of her peak fertility (pre-peak phase) and on the length of her menstrual cycle from the day after her peak fertility to the beginning of her next menstrual period (post-peak phase). This information, along with other aspects of her charting, is a significant part of her health record, and it can indicate a variety of possible conditions impacting her fertility.

With the help of your natural family planning instructor specially trained to assist couples who are having difficulty in conceiving or carrying a child full term, couples will be able to learn if their chart shows signs of underlying problems such as endometriosis, PCOD, ovarian cysts, or hormonal abnormalities, and the possibility of miscarriage or a high risk pregnancy.

Fertility charting allows the couple to truly partner with their physician. Sharing this information with their physician can suggest specific directions for further evaluation, diagnosis, and treatment.

NaProTECHNOLOGY: INFERTILITY SOLUTIONS IVF ALTERNATIVES

NaProTechnology, a new reproductive medical and surgical science, which integrates fertility charting, offers specialized training to physicians in the field of women's health. NaProTechnology stands for Natural Procreative Technology, and physicians who go on to receive this additional training are committed to working cooperatively with a woman's fertility.

Those couples interested in a **second opinion**, may want to consider looking for a physician trained in NaProTechnology. While there is no 100% guaranteed success, NaPro trained physicians have achieved effectiveness rates ranging from 40-80%, depending upon the underlying condition. **To locate NaPro physicians in your area see the box below.**

Success comes from diagnosing and treating the problem that is causing the infertility. Assisted Reproductive Technologies such as IVF are not employed, and the effectiveness rates of NaProTechnology remains superior to those of ART and IVF. NaProTechnology offers real solutions to infertility.

This new emerging women's health science is committed, first, to determining the causes of a couples' infertility and to treating those causes. Second, if an initial treatment is unsuccessful, these physicians are committed to finding alternative causes.

In addition, NaPro physicians respect the natural act of procreation as essential to achieving a pregnancy. They fully respect the dignity and integrity of the couple.

For information on NFP instructors with
infertility training and a
NaProTECHNOLOGY physician contact
the FAMILY LIFE OFFICE

814-886-5551 familylife@dioceseaj.org

NaProTechnology also combines fertility charting with patient care. Fertility charting begins two months before any diagnosis and provides a foundation for care by allowing for targeted timing of both fertility tests and fertility treatments. Fertility charting actively involves the woman in her health care and individualizes her therapy.

In addition, fertility charting allows the physician and the woman a unique window onto her recovery, as the chart patterns begin to normalize in response to treatments.

Thomas Hilgers, M.D.—Clinical Professor in the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology at Creighton University School of Medicine—developed, along with colleagues, both the new women's health science and the standardized Creighton Model Ovulation Method used in charting your fertility. In 2004 he published *The Medical and Surgical Practice of NaProTECHNOLOGY*.

ADVANTAGES OF NaProTECHNOLOGY WITH FERTILITY CHARTING

- 20-40% effectiveness rate for achieving a pregnancy from using only your time of peak fertility
- 40-80% NaPro effectiveness rate for achieving a pregnancy and carrying a child full term (depending upon the underlying causes of the infertility or subfertility)
- Higher effectiveness rates than IVF
- Addresses underlying issues in the woman's reproductive health and seeks to restore the health of her fertility
- Effective protocols for preventing preterm births
- Avoids the multiple gestation rates of IVF and the need for "selective abortion"
- Previously failed IVF patients have conceived and carried a child full term
- Respects the dignity and integrity of the couple and their natural procreative act
- More affordable than IVF as most NaPro treatments are covered by health insurance because they treat actual causes of infertility

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Books

"Infertility Journey: Making Faith Informed Decisions Under the Guiding Hands of God," by Jeannie and Bruce Hanneman. This 21-page booklet understands the grief of infertility. The couple write about the marital, social, spiritual, and ethical issues surrounding infertility. Available from Elizabeth Ministry International at <www.elizabethministry.com>. Go to Online Store > Fertility and Infertility > Books.

The NaProTechnology Revolution: Unleashing the Power in a Woman's Cycle by Thomas Hilgers, M.D. (2010) introduces the new reproductive health science of NaProTechnology for the lay public, informing women about new insights into women's health and fertility issues. Describes in detail, in a way for all women to understand, the nature and treatment for many women's health issues, including infertility, subfertility, premature births, and the problems with IVF.

Fertility, Cycles, and Nutrition, 4th ed., by Marilyn Shannon. Written by a NFP instructor with a M.A. degree in human physiology, this book provides important nutritional information on supporting the monthly and fertility cycles.

In Their Own Words: Women Healed, edited by Jean Packard with physician comments by Thomas Hilgers, M.D., provides testimonials of fifty women, including women with miscarriage, infertility, and prevention of preterm birth, who received help through NaProTechnology.

Websites

www.creightonmodel.com

www.naprotechnology.com

Videos

"FertilityCare and NaProTechnology" at

www.fertilitycare.net

[*New Hope for Infertility Part 1*](#)

[*New Hope for Infertility Part 2*](#)