



MAMA LOUNGE
natural medicine for fertility, pregnancy & postpartum

Basal Body Temperature Charting (BBT)



BBT charting brings a woman in touch with her body's unique hormonal profile. Because key fertility hormones such as estrogen and progesterone affect the temperature-regulating center of the brain, we can infer hormonal patterns by measuring the basal (or baseline) temperature. Remember, estrogen is a yin, moist, cool hormone. Therefore, during the yin/follicular phase, temperatures should be lower than during the yang/luteal phase, in which warmer progesterone predominates. You should be able to see a distinct temperature shift that indicates ovulation. If this

dramatic temperature change is not clear, the BBT pattern provides clues as to why you're not ovulating, or possibly what is hindering your fertility.

How to Chart

Before starting to chart you will need to purchase a BBT thermometer, which can be purchased at any Walgreens. It doesn't have to be fancy, but needs to read to the hundredth degree, as your basal temperature rises only slightly when you are ovulating. Start recording your temperature on day 1 of your cycle (the first day of menstrual bleeding). For an accurate reading, the temperature should be taken at the same time every morning and after at least 3 (though 5 is preferable) hours of uninterrupted sleep. As soon as you wake up, before urinating, standing up, cuddling, drinking water, etc. take your temperature and record it on your graph. (There are also many apps you can download such as Fertility Friend or Glow.)

Monitoring Cervical Mucous (CM)

Cervical fluid has a life of its own. Rather than being a passive player in conception, it's an active participant in achieving pregnancy. This type of body fluid changes several times during the menstrual cycle. It shifts consistency during your cycle to either block the cervix to outside invaders (be it sperm or bacteria) or nourish sperm and facilitate their movement towards a waiting egg. Infertile CM is a barrier to protect the uterus.

You should have at least 3 days of wet, stretchy, clear or egg white CM. If not, there are some steps you can take to enhance it. Some practitioners advocate using Mucinex, Pre-Seed, or Robitussin five days prior to ovulation to soften and alkalize CM. Women taking evening primrose oil, from day one through ovulation can dramatically improve the quality and quantity of CM.

When to have intercourse?

Once you know the week you are most fertile, be sure to have intercourse about every other day that week up until the day after ovulation. You may certainly have intercourse before and after this time period, but won't impact your chances of conception. Resource: Dr. Maureen Rozenn, *Your Fertility Program*.