

# Charting Your Cycle

## Why do we need to chart?

- Getting to know your unique body and ovulation signals
- Are you ovulating?
- Is your cycle long enough?
- Are any treatments needed?
- Is there an ovulation pattern month to month?
- Is there information that might change your chosen method of becoming pregnant?

## BBT (basal body temp)

- **Instructions:** take temp every morning first thing, before doing anything else.
- **Equipment:** special BBT thermometer at pharmacy, 0.1 degrees
- **Notes:** best after a minimum of 5 hours uninterrupted sleep (chart if you get less sleep)
- **Trick:** tie thermometer to a piece of string that you tack into the wall or tie to your headboard.  
This way the thermometer is right next to your head when you wake up.
- **Usefulness:** Temp spikes about 12-72 hours after ovulation.
- **Variations that alter temps:** illness, travel, alcohol, fatigue, stress, pets/kids in & out of bed, sleeping soundly, different beds, inconsistent room temp, urinating during the night, note these on your chart

## LH Surge & OPK (ovulation predictor kit)

- **Where to buy the OPK?** pharmacy or online at Amazon.
- **Brands?** test out a few, I recommend purchasing in bulk
- **When to test?** Start testing on day 10 if you have a 28 day cycle
  - if it's positive the first day then start earlier next cycle
  - once you get a positive test one more day to see if you get a second positive
- **Time of day?** 10 am to 8 PM, not first urine of the morning → can give false positive
  - Same time every day is optimal
  - Once a day is fine for some, others have a small window and need to test twice a day.
- **Usefulness:** OPK is positive about 12-36 hours prior to ovulation

- **STRONG positive** vs WEAK positive → CHART IT

## Cervical Mucous

- **Why is this helpful?** Prior to ovulation, mucous becomes more watery, having an egg white consistency that acts as a “superhighway” for sperm to get through the cervix and into the uterus. Cervical mucous tends to last 2-5 days, and goes away about 12-24 hours prior to ovulation. If you are conceiving via intercourse, fertile mucous is often a good sign that timing is optimal.

## Charting FAQ's

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| • Do I need to chart the full month?             | That is ideal   |
| • Which variables are most useful to chart?      | Depends on your body<br>Often: temps, OPK, cervical fluid |
| • What if some variables don't seem significant? | Interpret later   |
| • What is double ovulation?                      | 2 ovulations per cycle                                    |
| • What do I do when the BBT chart is confusing?  | Take it to a fertility specialist                         |