Patient education • CLINICAL PRACTICE

Basal body temperature chart



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Instructions

- The first morning of menstrual bleeding (not spotting) is the start of each cycle. Indicate menstruation with an X on the chart, starting on day 1 of cycle. If spotting occurs mark this with a - (see sample chart)
- Insert date of month in space provided
- Use any centigrade thermometer. A digital thermometer may be easier to read
- Each morning, before getting out of bed or eating/drinking, place your thermometer under your tongue. If using a nondigital thermometer your

temperature should be taken for 3 minutes. Do this every morning, even during menstruation

- Record your temperature reading on the chart by placing a dot at the intersection of the appropriate temperature and date lines. Join the dots with a straight line (see sample chart)
- On the chart, mark the days you had intercourse by circling the temperature dot (see sample chart)
- It is important to start a new chart on the day menstrual bleeding begins

Additional information

- Your doctor may order a blood test for serum progesterone to confirm ovulation. This is best done 7 days after your temperature rises
- Your temperature chart is an indirect predictor that cannot confirm the exact day of ovulation. It is useful after the event has occurred
- Intercourse can take place at any time during the cycle, but at least every second day during the fertile phase.
 Over a number of cycles a pattern of your usual fertile time may become more apparent



