



YOUR BASAL BODY TEMPERATURE CHART

One of your very first assignments as a person trying to conceive will be to chart your Basal Body Temperature, or BBT. Your basal body temperature is one of the indicators, or informative symptoms, of your own ovulatory functions. Knowledge that ovulation occurs and when it occurs are essential in the investigation and treatment of infertility. The determination of the exact time of ovulation is important because this knowledge permits intercourse at the time of optimal fertility.

A monthly change in your basal body temperature is one of the signals that all may be well with your ovulatory functions. As progesterone increases, a slight increase in temperature should occur. Although normal temperature is stated to be 98.6 degrees Fahrenheit, slight variations from this value occur. A woman's temperature is lower during the first part of the menstrual cycle than it is during the last two weeks of the same cycle. Furthermore, the shift from lower to higher temperatures occurs at the time of ovulation. This change could be as slight as 0.5 to 1.0 degree elevation. Contrary to prior belief, it is now believed that once temperature rise has occurred, a woman may have missed the small window of opportunity to conceive. This leads to the importance of charting for several cycles in a row, to suggest a pattern.

We recommend that you keep track of your BBT for a minimum of three months. The resulting chart should give you an idea of whether or not you are ovulating on a typically regular basis. It may also give you some idea of when your most fertile days are during the average monthly.

How to Chart Your Basal Body Temperature

1. Specifically, you should use a *basal body temperature thermometer*, which is available at drugstores for around \$5.00 to \$15.00 and measures your temperature in easily readable tenths of a degree.
2. The first day of your period is considered Day 1 of your cycle; you will place an "x" on the chart for each day of period (not spotting).
3. Take your temperature each morning immediately after waking and before arising from bed. It is suggested that you write down the results before going on with your day, to avoid forgetting it later.
4. Be aware that it is not uncommon for your BBT to be easily affected and influenced by a number of factors: physical activity, alcohol intake, amount of rest, medicines, etc. Therefore, it is important to make note of any and all of these factors when you are charting.
5. Start a new chart the day menstrual bleeding begins. Mark the days of menstruation by an "x".