



Christian Voices for Life

Weekly Pro-Life

Education

Prayer

Action

Phone Apps for Contraception?



Education: Fertility Awareness-Based Methods (FABMs) of avoiding pregnancy work by allowing a woman to be aware of the fertile times of her cycle and abstaining from intercourse during those times. FABMs have been under-rated and not appreciated by the medical community for many years. The CDC now ranks FABMs as having typical use failure rates ranging from 2% to 23% (1). The 23% rate, however, is based on a seriously flawed study.(2) In recent years, phone apps have arisen to help women track their cycle and predict which days they are fertile. One app, Natural Cycles, requires the woman to take her basal temperature each

morning, and uses that data, along with accumulated data on the woman's cycles, to calculate the fertile days. This app has a typical use failure rate of 6.5%, and was approved in 2018 by the FDA as a method of contraception. (3) In 2019, the New York Times also published an article by a columnist who had been using an FABM for years. (4) Unfortunately, the August 2018 issue of *Obstetrics and Gynecology* included an article which falsely concluded that the majority of studies of the effectiveness of FABMs were of poor quality, and none were of high quality. A response to the critique has been published by the Fertility Awareness Collaborative to Teach the Science (FACTS).(3) FACTS recently sponsored a study to evaluate the efficacy of 40 different fertility apps which are based on a FABM, and indicated that they could be used to prevent pregnancy. Natural Womanhood has recently published an article with the results of the study. (5)

1. <https://www.cdc.gov/reproductivehealth/contraception/>
2. https://naturalwomanhood.org/cdcpetition/#_edn1
3. "Recent FDA News That's Great for Fertility Awareness.." from Natural Womanhood, 8/29/18, <http://bit.ly/2oDjCNm>
4. <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/04/17/parenting/fertility/fertility-awareness-methods.html>
5. <https://naturalwomanhood.org/how-do-you-pick-a-fertility-app-that-really-works-to-prevent-pregnancy/>



Prayer: Dear Father God, please help women to become more aware of both the dangers of hormonal contraception and the viable alternative of fertility awareness-based methods of avoiding pregnancy. Help everyone to understand your beautiful plan for sexuality, and the link between the unitive and procreative meanings of sexual intercourse. Help them to trust in You and Your plan for their lives. Please help doctors and the medical community to fully accept fertility awareness-based methods and not discount them because of flawed studies or a perceived link to the Catholic Church.



Action: Go to <https://naturalwomanhood.org/share-fam-with-your-doctor/> to download a 4 page medical update that you can bring to your doctor, to make sure he is aware of the facts about FABMs. If any of your friends are talking about methods of contraception, be sure to inform them that the best method is one that is free of any side effects or health risks, such as fertility awareness-based methods. Full use of the method means abstaining during fertile days, but a cycle of courtship and honeymoon can actually enhance a marriage. Couples who use NFP have an extremely low divorce rate.