

**THE
SCIENTIFIC
BASIS OF THE
STANDARD
DAYS
METHOD**



° The Institute for Reproductive Health (IRH) of Georgetown University is dedicated to the investigation and advancement of natural family planning (NFP). IRH believes that no single family planning method can meet the needs of all couples. Thus programs need to offer users a wider range of options.

° NFP has an important role to play in meeting the reproductive needs of couples. NFP is not a method in itself, but rather refers to methods used to plan for or prevent a pregnancy based on identifying the woman's fertile and infertile days, and the timing of intercourse to achieve their intentions.

° IRH efforts in developing and testing newer and simpler NFP methods are based on biological scientific facts established through research, such as the probability of pregnancy from intercourse on days relative to ovulation.

WHAT IS SDM?

- SDM is a simple fertility awareness-based method.

It helps a woman know her fertile days by counting the days of her cycle.

- It identifies days 8-19 of the cycle as fertile.

- It helps a couple avoid unplanned pregnancy by knowing when to abstain.

- It can also be used to achieve a pregnancy.

WHY A NEW NFP METHOD?

- There is a big demand for simple natural methods of family planning.
 - There is low use of existing natural methods.
- There is a high use of some kind of periodic abstinence and withdrawal.
 - There is low understanding of fertility.
- SDM has all the advantages of natural methods:
 - no side effects
 - no costly or imported commodities needed
 - promotes couple communication
 - involves both husband and wife

WHAT ARE THE SCIENTIFIC BASES OF SDM?

- Biological factors that determine a woman's fertile period:
 - ° timing of ovulation
 - ° maximum life span of the sperm cell, 5 days inside the woman's reproductive tract on fertile days
 - ° life span of the egg cell, 24 hours
- Probability of pregnancy during the fertile period is high.
- Intercourse on other days of the cycle outside the fertile period is essentially zero.
- For the average woman, this fertile period falls completely within days 8 to 19 of the cycle.
- By average woman, we mean a woman whose cycles meet the criteria of 26 days varying up to 32 days.

DEVELOPMENT AND TESTING OF THE METHOD

Concept of SDM validated thru theoretical analysis and computer simulation of over 7,600 cycles provided by the World Health Organization from it's ovulation method trials.

SDM was found socially acceptable in pilo studies done in 3 countries for 6 months using protocols and counselling guidelines developed by IRH.

High effectiveness rate of 95.25% resulted from clinical trials in 3 countries where women were followed-up for 13 cycles.

WHAT IS THE NECKLACE?

- A mnemonic tool (aid to memory)
- A necklace of color-coded beads with a movable rubber marker to help the woman track her cycle days.
- Helps her remember whether the days are fertile or infertile.
 - An effective tool
 - ° for the woman to learn her fertility
 - ° for the couple to communicate on fertility management
 - ° a teaching tool for the worker in counselling her client
 - The necklace is NOT SDM.

LEARNINGS

IRH would like to share the following learnings from the NFP work it has been involved in through the years:

- Involving men is key to successful use and many men do support the use of SDM.
 - Correct use increases over time.
 - Health providers, program managers, and health officials see SDM as easy/feasible to offer.
- Program managers are recognizing the need to generate resources to make the method sustainable.
- Women appreciate the knowledge they gain about their fertility and they find the knowledge empowering in negotiating their love-making.
 - Satisfied users are the best promoters.

SDM Natural And Moral?

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