

Fertility Awareness-Based Methods (FABM) – CON 16

Natural Family Planning (NFP)

DEFINITION

Use physical signs/ symptoms, like body temperature and cervical secretion, and cycle data to identify the “fertile window” or the days in each menstrual cycle when intercourse is most likely to result in pregnancy. When couples use NFP, they must abstain from having intercourse during the at-risk fertile days. With FABM, couples have to use another method such as barriers or withdrawal during those days to avoid pregnancy. Fertility awareness can also help a client achieve pregnancy, when desired. Efficacy is based on the couple’s ability to accurately identify the fertility window to aid in achieving or avoiding pregnancy.

SUBJECTIVE

Must include:

1. LMP
2. Assess for conditions that may make FABM more difficult to use and require more extensive counseling and follow-up (recent childbirth, current breastfeeding, recent menarche, recent discontinuation of hormonal contraceptive methods, approaching menopause, and anovulatory/irregular cycling).
3. Medical, sexual, and contraceptive history update, as appropriate.

May include:

1. Desire to use natural methods
2. Contraindications to hormonal or mechanical methods of birth control
3. Highly motivated couples willing to commit to abstinence or to use barrier method during fertile periods
4. FABM methods are not recommended for women with inability to abstain or use other methods during the fertile days; irregular cycles; an inability to interpret their fertility signs correctly; persistent reproductive tract infections; intermenstrual bleeding not distinguishable from menstruation or that impedes noticing secretions.

OBJECTIVE

May include:

1. Age-appropriate physical exam within the past 12 months
2. Height, weight, blood pressure and BMI

LABORATORY

May include:

1. Age-appropriate Pap smear screening
2. Negative urine pregnancy test
3. Vaginitis/cervicitis screening, as indicated (STD’s, PID, or vaginal infection may affect fertility signs)

ASSESSMENT

Client is a candidate for natural family planning and/or fertility awareness-combined method

PLAN

1. Provide education and information on the availability of emergency contraception when initiating method.
2. Provide detailed information on fertility awareness method(s), (i.e., Ovulation method, Cycle Beads, Sympto-thermal method, Calendar rhythm method, Standard Days Method and Two-Day Method)
3. Referrals, as indicated to local resources for education and training

CLIENT EDUCATION

Effective Date: 12/2/2023

Last Reviewed: 10/24/2023

Next Scheduled Review: 10/1/2024

1. Provide clients with recommendations on resources for fertility awareness. References for websites and phone apps are on FABM instruction sheet.
2. Review safer sex education and inform that NFP and FABM do NOT protect against STD's/HIV.
3. Recommend that client return to clinic annually and PRN for problems.

CONSULT / REFER TO PHYSICIAN

1. Infertility concerns

REFERENCES

1. Hatcher RA, Nelson A, Trussell J, Cwiak C, Cason P, Policar MS, Edelman A, Aiken ARA, Marrazzo J, Kowel D, eds. Contraceptive Technology. 21 edition. New York, NY: Ayer Company Publishers, Inc., 2018. pp 395-416.
2. [Reproductive Health | HHS Office of Population Affairs](#)
3. [Understanding and Counseling Potential Users on Fertility Awareness-Based Methods for Pregnancy Prevention Webinar | Reproductive Health National Training Center \(rhntc.org\)](#)
4. [RHNTC Fertility Awareness-Based Methods](#)