

Pros & Cons of NFP

Advantages of natural family planning:

Natural family planning is a healthy method of fertility regulation, as there is no interference with the normal physiology of the menstrual cycle, and therefore it protects future fertility. **It is also:**

- Eco-friendly – no hormones or chemicals are used that pollute the environment or that may harm the body.
- Highly effective – and it can be used to achieve as well as to avoid pregnancy, and can be used at all stages of a woman's reproductive life.
- Free from side effects – as there are no drugs or devices needed
- Easy to learn and use. After only three cycles each woman can confidently undertake self-observation and apply it to regulate her fertility.
- More independent- the couple have control of their fertility and are independent of outside agencies for prescriptions or devices.
- Improving communication between the couple as both partners agree to share the responsibility for fertility regulation. "Couples find that living with their combined fertility changes their relationship to one of greater mutual consideration and respect".¹
- Morally acceptable to all, irrespective of religion or culture.
- Intuitive – women become familiar with the natural patterns of their menstrual cycle and can readily notice any unusual change from the normal.
- Inexpensive – it's cheap, the cost being nominal only, a thermometer and charts.

Disadvantages of natural family planning:

- Abstinence may be a problem for some couples, and may require a change of life style.
- Fertility is shared, therefore living with NFP requires that both partners be motivated and agree to use NFP as their method of fertility regulation.
- It requires training from a qualified NFP teacher, and it usually requires charting for about three cycles for the woman to become completely familiar with her own cervical mucus symptom, basal body temperature (BBT) and cycle pattern.

¹ Klaus, Hanna; 'Natural family planning – Is it scientific? Is it effective?' see page 15; Newman Lecture Series 1-May 21, 2000. (online)