

# WHO BENEFITS FROM NATURAL FAMILY PLANNING?



COUPLES  
#TTC

Trying to Conceive

Couples trying to conceive can use the information they get from Natural Family Planning to time intercourse so they maximize their chances of conceiving. Without knowledge of NFP and how to observe and interpret fertility, couples with healthy fertility will typically have pregnancy rates of 20% after 1 cycle, and 90% after 12 cycles.<sup>1</sup> **But compare this to users who have been properly trained in an NFP method: pregnancy rates after 1 cycle can go up to 42% and can reach 88% by just 6 cycles!**<sup>2</sup> Couples with sub-fertility or infertility can also glean valuable information from the practice of NFP, which can sometimes help identify particular fertility issues and will enable them to present precious data to their clinicians for treatment. In conjunction with a restorative reproductive health approach, NFP can be a powerful tool for couples trying to conceive!

Sources:

- 1) Hatcher R., et al. *Contraceptive Technology*, Ayer Company Publisher, 2018 and
- 2) Gnoth C., et al, *Time to Pregnancy*. *Human Reproduction*, 2003;18:1959-1966.



COUPLES  
#TTA

Trying to Avoid  
or Postpone

Pope John Paul II wrote: "The choice of the natural rhythms involves accepting the cycle of the person, that is the woman, and thereby accepting dialogue, reciprocal respect, shared responsibility and self- control."<sup>1</sup> When couples have discerned that it is best to postpone pregnancy, the Church teaches that Natural Family Planning is fundamentally different from contraception. By choosing to respect the natural rhythms of fertility and infertility, we safeguard the dignity of the spouses AND uphold both unitive and procreative aspects of intercourse. While it is true that many healthcare providers today will assume couples are using the older (and much less effective) Rhythm Method, the fact is that **couples can also achieve efficacy rates with modern methods of NFP that rival or are even BETTER THAN hormonal contraceptives!**<sup>2</sup>

Sources:

- 1) John Paul II, *Familiaris Consortio* #32
- 2) Perragallo U., et al, *Effectiveness of Fertility Awareness-Based Methods for Pregnancy Prevention: A Systematic Review*, *Obstet Gynecol*. 2018 Sept;132(3) 591-604. and Hatcher R., et al, *Contraceptive Technology*. Ayer Company Publishing, 2018

It's becoming more common for women, healthcare providers, and even athletic trainers to think about menstrual cycles as a **fifth vital sign for women's health**. The American Academy of Pediatrics states that: "Once young females begin menstruating, evaluation of the menstrual cycle should be included with an assessment of other vital signs. **By including this information with the other vital signs, clinicians emphasize the important role of menstrual patterns in reflecting overall health status.**"\* The same goes for adult women! This means that ALL women, regardless of marital status, can use the information gleaned from instruction in Natural Family Planning to get a better sense of their overall health and fertility patterns. It also means that parents may be interested in working with a cycle educator to help their daughters learn about healthy menstrual cycle patterns, even if they choose not to chart them during the teenage years.



WOMEN  
MONITORING  
HEALTH

\*Source: Menstruation in Girls and Adolescents: Using the Menstrual Cycle as a Vital Sign, American Academy of Pediatrics, Committee on Adolescence, American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists and Committee on Adolescent Health Care *Pediatrics* November 2006, 118 (5) 2245-2250



Interested in learning more? Contact your diocesan Office of Marriage and Family Life (or equivalent) or visit [www.pearlandthistle.com](http://www.pearlandthistle.com) for more resources!