



### **If You Choose Fertility Awareness-Based Methods (FAMs)...**

... a professional will teach you how to keep track of your menstrual cycle to help you predict "safe" and "unsafe" days. Abstain from intercourse (**periodic abstinence**) or use condoms, diaphragms, caps, shields, or spermicide during nine or more "unsafe" days.

FAMs may include:

- checking temperature daily
- checking cervical mucus daily
- recording menstrual cycles on calendar
- keeping a very accurate record of when your period comes each month
- keeping track of your menstrual cycle using a string of beads called CycleBeads

#### **75–99% Effective**

Not effective against sexually transmitted infections — use latex or female condoms to reduce the risk.

#### **Advantage**

- no medical or hormonal side effects

#### **Possible Disadvantages**

- requires expert training before effective use
- uncooperative partners
- taking risks during "unsafe" days
- poor record keeping
- illness and lack of sleep affect body temperature and may interfere with the temperature method
- changes caused by vaginal infections and douches may interfere with the cervical mucus method
- must have regular menstrual cycles that are never shorter than 26 days and never longer than 32 days to use CycleBeads

#### **Cost**

\$5–\$8 and up/temperature kits (drugstores)

\$13/CycleBeads ([www.cyclebeads.com](http://www.cyclebeads.com))

Free classes often available in health and church centers.