

The Utility of Fertility Awareness Based Methods in Primary Care










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A Narrative Literature Review

BACKGROUND

Fertility Awareness Based Methods (FABMs) are family planning methods that involve identifying the “fertile window” in order to avoid or achieve pregnancy. By using physiologic observations such as basal body temperature, cervical mucus, and urinary hormones to identify this fertile window, FABMs can be used to either achieve or avoid pregnancy.

EFFECTIVENESS

Method	Perfect Use*	Typical Use*	Utilizes
Marquette	0%	2.0-6.8%	 
Creighton	0.1%	17%	 
SymptoThermal	0.4%	1.6%	  
NaturalCycles	2.0%	7.2%	 
Condoms	–	13.0%	
OCPs	2.0%	4.0-7.0%	
Mirena IUD	–	<1%	

*Values expressed as 1 year pregnancy rate

FABMs IN MEDICINE

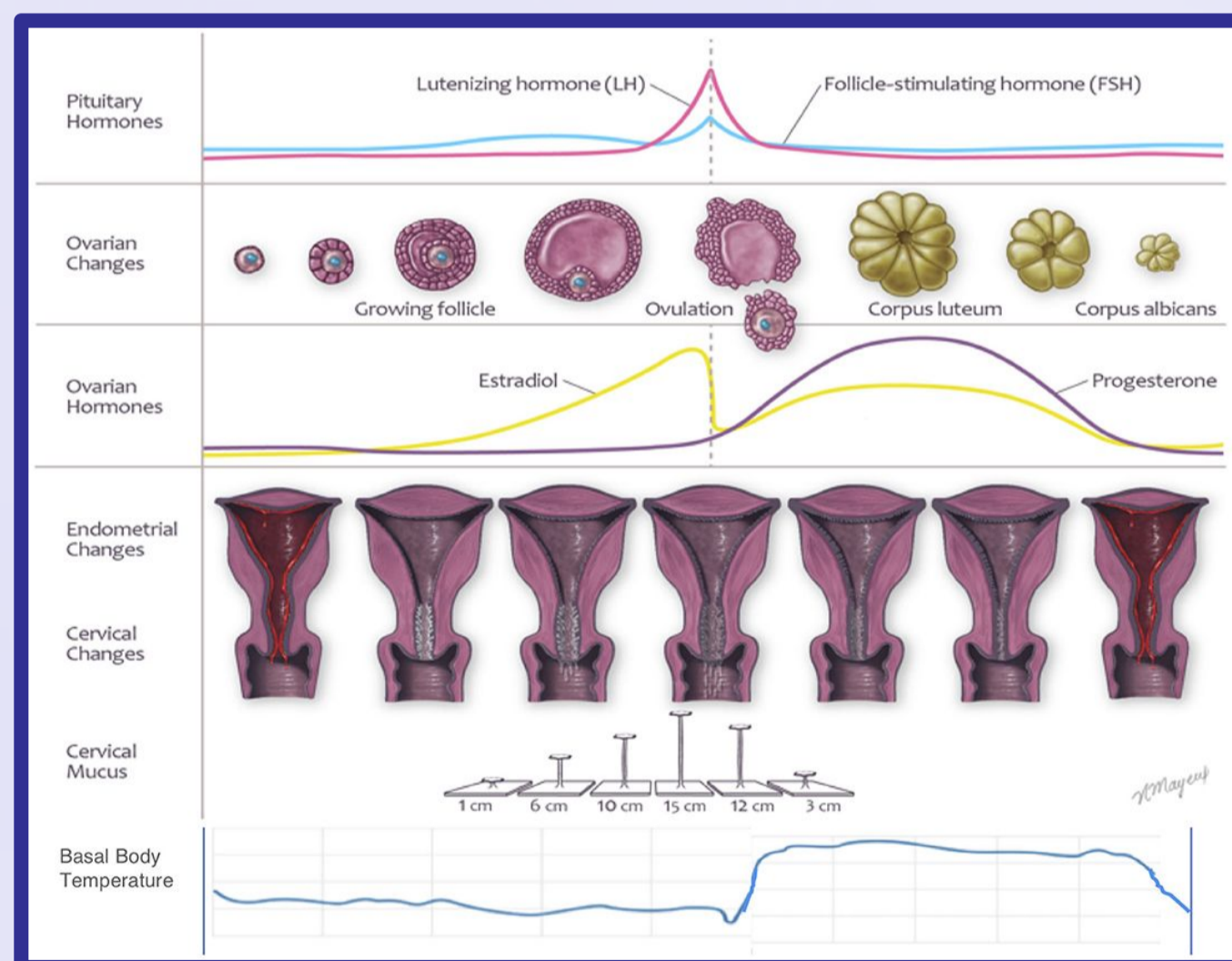
MEDICAL KNOWLEDGE

- <1 hour spent teaching FABMs in Medical Schools⁶
- 25-45% of FM Residencies provide no FABM education⁷
- 4% of primary care physicians are trained in an FABM⁸

COMMUNITY INTEREST

- 50% of physicians mention FABMs for family planning⁸
- 20% of women are interested in using FABMs⁹
- 73% of women use a menstrual tracking app when trying to conceive³

PHYSIOLOGY OF FABMS



(Duane et al., 2022)



LH and Estrogens can be detected in urine using Fertility Monitors¹



Cycle lengths vary by an average of 2.6 days in any given person²








Estrogen leads to increased cervical mucus 4-8 days prior to ovulation³






Progesterone causes a 0.2°C increase in basal body temperature⁴

ADVANTAGES OF FABMs

-  Absence of side effects; reversible
-  Educates patients on reproductive health
-  Aids in early diagnosis of reproductive abnormalities
-  Improves communication in relationships
-  Affordable, Ethical, Low environmental impact

DIAGNOSE AND TREAT INFERTILITY¹⁰

-  85% of couples using FABMs are able to achieve pregnancy by 6 months
-  NaProTechnology is a protocol for infertility that combines FABMs with medical/surgical interventions
-  NaProTechnology is a more conservative and affordable option than IVF/IUI and has a comparable live birth rate (50-66%)

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