

## FACTS ABOUT FERTILITY (YOUR CYCLE)

Though you may see your monthly cycle as a “burden,” and find irritation and inconvenience because of the effects of your period (mood changes, bloating, bleeding, etc.), your menstrual cycle is really a complex system that ensures you reach perhaps one of your greatest desires in life—the ability to bear children/have a family someday.

The importance of understanding your cycle, the changes your body goes through during the days between your periods and what those changes signal, namely ovulation or the release of an egg, is important in both preventing an unintended pregnancy and achieving conception if a child is desired. If you have not chosen abstinence as your means of controlling unintended pregnancy (and perhaps for other reasons such as prevention of STI/STD’s, or for emotional, relational, or spiritual reasons/values), then you are well served to understand your cycle in order to protect yourself, your partner, and in the event of an unintended pregnancy, another potential human being (see fetal growth and development section for more understanding). Take a look at this link to understand your cycle of fertility.

### Basic Schematic of the Menstrual Cycle

Menstrual bleeding	Cervical Fluid-clear and sticky, changing to stretchy		
Day 1-6	7-9	10 through 17	18-28
Phase One	Dry Days	<b>Ovulation</b>	Dry Days
	Phase Two		Phase Three

**Bleeding Days:** Your hormones drop, you may feel sad or “weepy”

**Dry Days:** Your hormones increase, you feel “ok” or “normal”

**Cervical Fluid Days:** Your hormones continue to increase, you may feel more energetic and more easily excited sexually

**Dry Days:** (Third Phase) your pre-menstrual phase. Because your hormones are both up and down, you can feel “moody” or “cranky”

### Menstrual Cycle

<http://www.womenshealth.gov/publications/our-publications/fact-sheet/menstruation.html>

### Women’s Health

<http://www.womenshealth.gov/>

