

# Contraception rules for the STM

## Phase 1

1. **Your period is potentially fertile.** If you have never had a cycle less than 26 days, had a confirmed ovulation 12-16 days before this period, and are not perimenopausal, you may consider your first 5 days safe. If you have a history of short cycles, are nearing peri-menopause or are serious about avoiding pregnancy only consider the first 3 or less days safe for unprotected intercourse.
2. **Choose one of two:**  
**Doering day rule:** You are safe on any dry day in the evening UNTIL you have reached your doering day. After your doering day you are considered fertile even if you have not seen any cervical fluid. Find your Doering day by taking your earlier temperature shift and subtract 7 from it. If your earliest shift was CD 15 your Doering day would be 8.  
**Early infertile days rule:** On the evening of each day in which you observe NO cervical fluid or have your infertile pattern you may consider yourself infertile.
3. **Choose one of two:**  
**Every other day rule:** You are safe for unprotected intercourse on a dry day only if you have not had intercourse the evening before. This is so that semen, spermicide, lube, or irritation is not confused for cervical fluid or does not dry up your cervical fluid that would be present. *If you did not use spermicide or lubricants*, you may choose the less conservative:  
**Know you're dry rule:** After unprotected intercourse, eliminate semen using kegals or your fingers and if you remain dry the next day you may consider yourself safe for unprotected intercourse. This is less conservative because even though you may not have cervical fluid, the alkaline semen may change the environment of the vagina enough to help the sperm survive a little longer until you DO have fertile fluid the next day.

## Phase 2

Do not have unprotected intercourse during this time! **Abstain for the highest effectiveness.** Otherwise it's a great time for alternative sex or "doubling up" on your contraceptives of choice.

## Phase 3

**These two rules *must* be used to "cross-check", i.e., if one says you are infertile and the other does not, you must consider yourself fertile until both rules indicate infertility, at which time you are safe for unprotected intercourse for the remainder of the cycle.**

1. **Temperature rule:** When your temperature rises at least 2/10ths of 1 degree Fahrenheit above your last 6 temperatures, highlight your previous 6 temperatures and draw a coverline 1/10th of 1 degree Fahrenheit above the highest temperature. Count the first high temperature as 1. On the evening of your 3<sup>rd</sup> high temperature you are infertile. If a temperature dips below the coverline you must start the count over.
2. **Peak rule:** Your peak day is the last day of slippery cervical fluid or lubricative vaginal sensation. After your fertile cervical fluid patch you will either dry up right away or begin to dry up, with your mucus having a different consistency. You can determine your peak day in retrospect on the evening of the day you dry up or begin to dry up. The peak day is the LAST day of slippery cervical fluid or vaginal sensation and not necessarily the day with the most fluid. Mark your peak day and count 1 on the first day of dry or drying up post-peak mucus. On the 4<sup>th</sup> day post-peak you are safe for unprotected intercourse. If

you have another day of peak fluid you must start the count over.