

Peak cervical mucus: an effective approach to achieving pregnancy

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Introduction

Infertility is a major personal and public health issue. Assisted reproductive technologies (ART) are limited by cost, psychosocial impact and accessibility. Knowledge of the physiological signs of fertility can increase the probability of conception or be used to avoid conception.

Aims

To assess the utility of a fertility awareness based method (FABM) of family planning for achieving pregnancy.

To account for factors including age, duration of unplanned infertility, and physiological features that contribute to conception failure/success.

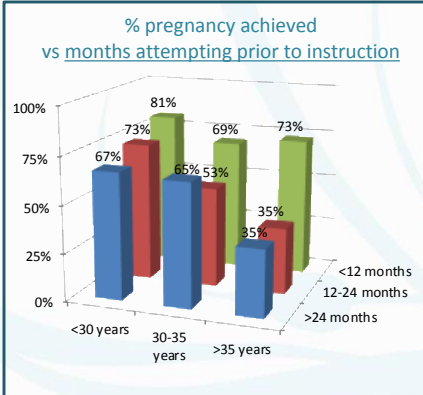
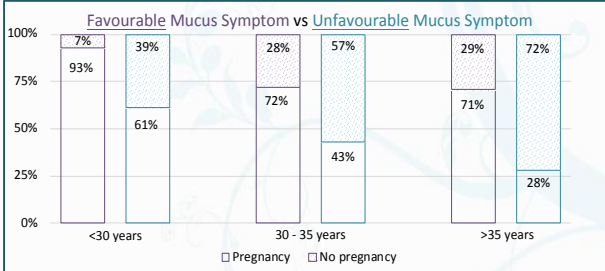
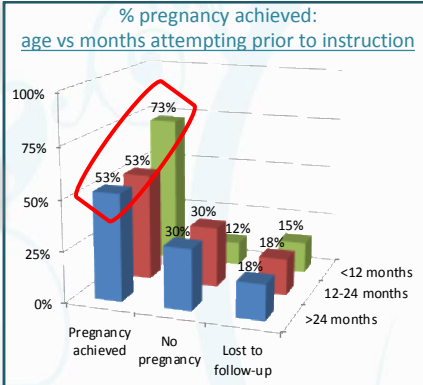
Methods

Records from 449 consecutive women presenting at least twice to 17 Australian Billings Ovulation Method® clinics from 1999 – 2003 were collated along with a mailed questionnaire. **Participants were instructed in fertility-awareness and to time their intercourse with the Peak mucus symptom, ie the last day of the slippery sensation.** Follow-up was up to 24 months.

Results

Months trying for pregnancy prior to study:	Normal (<12 mths)	Infertile (12-24 mths)	Prolonged Infertile (>24 mths)	Total
Number	188	156	40	384
Female age, yrs (mean, SD)	32.8 (4.3)	33.1 (4.6)	34.9 (4.0)	33.1 (4.5)
Pregnancy	137 (73%)	82 (53%)	21 (53%)	240 (63%)
No pregnancy	22	46	12	80
Unknown	29	28	7	64

Female age group	n (%)	Preg (%)	n (%)	Preg (%)	n (%)	Preg (%)	n (%)	Preg (%)
<30 years	43 (23)	35 (81)	37 (24)	27 (73)	3 (8)	2 (67)	83 (22)	65 (78)
30-35 years	97 (52)	67 (69)	76 (49)	40 (53)	20 (50)	13 (65)	193 (50)	120 (62)
>35 years	48 (26)	35 (73)	43 (28)	15 (35)	17 (43)	6 (35)	108 (28)	56 (52)



Conclusion

A structured approach to fertility assessment/instruction with symptom-focused intercourse increases pregnancy rates across age demographics and for those with prolonged infertility.