

Guide to Basal Body Temperature Charting

Basal Body Temperature (BBT) charting is a great way for you to become more attuned to your body and visualize the progress you are making in the clinic. Most women find this to be very empowering as it allows them to actively participate in the changes they are making and gives them hope as they see their cycles improve each month.

The BBT chart reveals two key pieces of information for women trying to conceive: 1. *If you are ovulating* and 2. How long your follicular and luteal phases are. It is not an accurate predictor of *when* ovulation occurs; however, if you have a similar pattern from month to month, in which your temperature rises consistently on the same day each month, you may be able to predict when you are likely to ovulate. Consistent charting will help you become more attuned to your body's rhythms and help us to develop the most effective acupuncture treatments and herbal formulas to optimize your fertility.

What You'll Need:

1. Basal Body Temperature (BBT) Chart or App (We suggest Kindara) to keep track of your temperature
2. A special BBT thermometer (available in drugstores) which records your temperature in smaller increments

How to Use the Chart:

1. Take your temperature orally (or vaginally, but keep your method consistent) first thing in the morning before you get out of bed or do anything else- that means no coffee, no water, no peeing or even moving around until you've taken your temperature.
2. Take your temperature at the same time every day. Set an alarm if you need to.
 - Keep in mind your temperature rises 1/10th of a degree every half hour, so adjust your results accordingly (Subtract 1/10th of a degree for every hour you sleep past your usual time.)
3. It is important that you get a minimum of 5 hours sleep and at least 3 hours of consecutive sleep to get a valid reading.
4. Record your temperature on your BBT chart each day.
5. Underneath the temperature chart, you can record other observations and events including bleeding/spotting, breast changes, abdomen pain, intercourse, and cervical mucus.*
6. Bring your BBT chart with you to each appointment.

*Cervical mucus fluctuates throughout the cycle. Ideally you should notice a stretchy clear cervical fluid for several days before ovulation. This egg-white-like cervical mucus helps the sperm reach the egg. Note if/when you observe this cervical mucus on your chart. Your most fertile day is the last day you observe it. After several cycles you will be able to determine which day is your last and act accordingly.

Understanding Your Results:

In the first phase of your cycle, known as the follicular phase (from the first day of your period until ovulation), you can expect temperatures to be lower, between 97 and 97.5 degrees. These lower temperatures are an indication of estrogen's influence during the first half of your cycle. After you ovulate the temperatures rise, between 97.6 and 98.6 degrees. These elevated temperatures indicate an increase in progesterone during the second half of the cycle, known as the luteal phase. Ideally temperatures will rise after ovulation and stay elevated for 12-16 days, or more than 18 days if you are pregnant.