

Standard Days Method™ and CycleBeads™

What is the Standard Days Method?

The Standard Days Method is a natural method of family planning. It is **95% effective** when used correctly, and is **easy to teach, learn, and use**. It helps a woman identify the days when pregnancy is likely based on a “fixed fertile window”, days 8-19 of her menstrual cycle.¹ To use this method, many women rely on a simple visual tool, CycleBeads.

What are CycleBeads?



CycleBeads are a color-coded string of beads that represents a woman’s menstrual cycle and helps her use the Standard Days Method. Each bead represents a day of the cycle, and the color of the bead indicates whether or not that is a day when pregnancy is likely. A woman moves the ring in the direction of the arrow every day to keep track of which cycle day she is on, know whether pregnancy is likely that day, and monitor her cycle length.

Who can use the Standard Days Method and CycleBeads?

The Standard Days Method is most effective for women who:

- * Have regular menstrual cycles between 26 and 32 days long¹
- * Can avoid unprotected sex during their fertile days

In addition to supporting the Standard Days Method, CycleBeads can:

- * Help a woman learn about her menstrual cycles
- * Encourage communication and self-advocacy with both a partner and a healthcare provider
- * Help adolescent girls understand their changing bodies

Contraceptive Failure of User-Directed Methods

% of pregnancies in the first year

| | Correct Use | Actual Use |
|------------------------------|-------------|------------|
| Oral Contraceptives | 0.1 | 5 |
| Condoms | 3 | 14 |
| Standard Days Method* | 5 | 12 |
| Diaphragms | 6 | 20 |
| Spermicides | 6 | 26 |
| No Method | 85 | 85 |

Adapted from Contraceptive Technology, 17th edition, 1998.

*Arevalo et al., (Institute for Reproductive Health, Georgetown University), *Contraception*, 2002; 65:333-338

Factors that increase effectiveness of the Standard Days Method...

- * The method works best for women with cycles between 26 and 32 days long.
- * CycleBeads increase women’s ability to use the method. In a clinical trial, 97% of women were able to use CycleBeads correctly over 13 months.
- * CycleBeads help women communicate with their partners, increasing men’s involvement and support for correct method use.

The Standard Days Method, like most other family planning methods, does not protect against sexually transmitted diseases.

¹ Arevalo, Jennings and Sinai. “Efficacy of a new method of family planning: the Standard Days Method”, *Contraception* 65 (2002) 333-338.

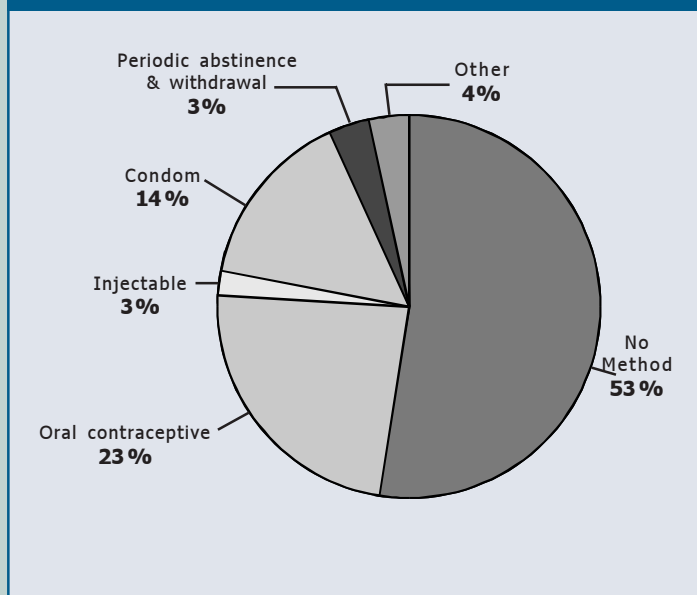
² According to data from the World Health Organization, more than 80% of cycles are within the 26-32 day range.

What needs do the Standard Days Method and CycleBeads meet?

Many women **lack understanding of their menstrual cycles**. A substantial number **use no contraceptive method** even though they do not want a pregnancy. The most common reason women discontinue a family planning method is their **concern about side effects**. Other fertility awareness-based methods are not widely available, and they are difficult to learn and use. Thus, there is a significant unmet need for an easy-to-use method with no side effects.



Contraceptive Use of U.S. Women Age 15 - 24 by % Using Method*



* All contraceptive use statistics are from the 1995 National Survey of Family Growth.

Did you know?

- ✦ Over 3 million women of childbearing age in the U.S. use no contraceptives even though they don't want to get pregnant.*
- ✦ There are more than 3 million unintended pregnancies every year in the U.S. More than half are to women who use no method of family planning.*
- ✦ Almost 1 million women use periodic abstinence as their primary family planning method* despite the fact that most don't know on which days they are likely to get pregnant. (Source: Opinion Research Corporation International)
- ✦ Oral contraceptives are the most popular user-directed method of birth control, but the average length of use is less than 5 months. Most discontinuation is due to adverse side effects. (Source: Family Practice Notebook)
- ✦ Users of the Standard Days Method are far more likely to use condoms in conjunction with this method than users of other non-barrier methods. (Source: CEMOPLAF)

How was this method established?

The Standard Days Method and CycleBeads were developed by the Institute for Reproductive Health, part of Georgetown University's School of Medicine and Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology. The Institute conducts **research** and advances **scientific information on fertility awareness and natural family planning methods**. The Institute's goal is to help people make informed choices about family planning and provide them with simple, effective natural options.

To develop the Standard Days Method, researchers at the Institute for Reproductive Health conducted efficacy studies in several countries. The Institute further assessed the methods acceptability, service delivery issues, and ease of use.

How can I get more information?

To find out more about Standard Days Method materials and services, please contact the Institute for Reproductive Health at (202) 687-1392, email at irhinfo@georgetown.edu, or the website www.irh.org. For more information about CycleBeads, please visit www.cyclebeads.com.

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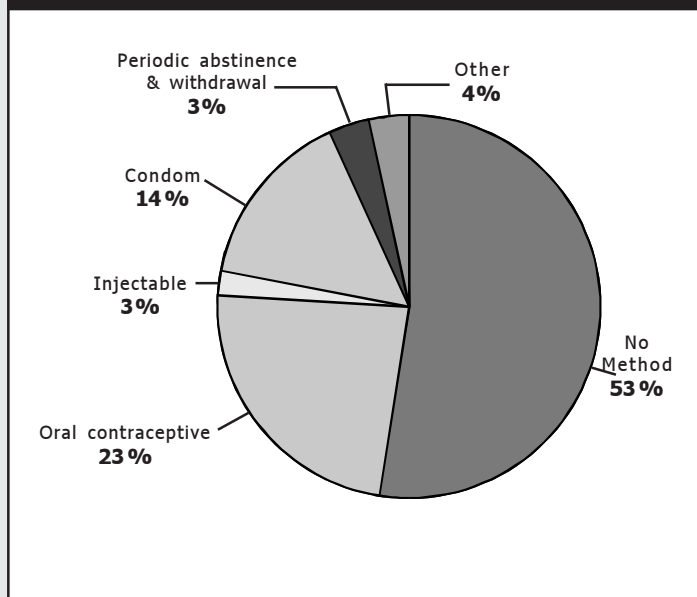
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