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Docs Can Go Back to School Online to Fill a Gap In Their Education

Washington, DC – It's back to school time for K-12 and college students across the country. But traditional students aren't the only ones who will be mastering new material. Now doctors will be able to earn credit for taking online training in natural family planning, a topic not taught in most medical schools.

Physicians play an important role in helping a woman choose an appropriate contraceptive method. "Ideally a physician should be aware of the pros and cons of all available types of family planning so that she or he is able help a patient chose the method that is best for her needs," said Victoria Jennings, Ph.D., director of Georgetown University's Institute for Reproductive Health and professor of obstetrics and gynecology. "An important component in helping a patient choose an appropriate contraceptive method is to consider her preferences as well as medical eligibility criteria. For many women, this makes natural family planning a good choice" she said.

Dr. Jennings and Helain Landy, M.D., professor and chair of Georgetown's Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology, co-authored a paper addressing the implications of the lack of physician training in natural family planning which was published in the July 2006 issue of *Contemporary Obstetrics & Gynecology*.

"The on-line training module that has been created by the Institute for Reproductive Health provides a welcome opportunity for providers to learn how to provide their clients with accurate and succinct information on natural family planning. The program is pertinent for physicians, nurses, and midwives who wish to gain credible experience in this important counseling area," said Dr. Landy.

Physicians can go to http://www.irh.org/SDM_Training/ to study the Standard Days Method, a new highly effective natural family planning methods developed by Georgetown researchers. Upon successful completion of comprehensive course, physicians earn 2.0 Continuing Medical Education (CME) credits. Many states require physicians to earn CME credits to maintain their medical licenses.

This online training can also be taken by nurses, nurse practitioners, nurse midwives, midwives and other healthcare professionals for CEU credit.

The Institute has developed the Standard Days Method® and the TwoDay Method® of natural family planning as well as CycleBeads®, a visual aid that lets a woman know exactly when she is fertile.

About the Institute for Reproductive Health

The Institute for Reproductive Health is dedicated to helping women and men make informed choices about family planning and providing them with simple and effective natural options. As part of Georgetown University's Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology, the Institute conducts research to develop natural methods of family planning and tests them in service delivery settings.

About Georgetown University Medical Center

Georgetown University Medical Center is an internationally recognized academic medical center with a three-part mission of research, teaching and patient care (through our partnership with MedStar Health). Our mission is carried out with a strong emphasis on public service and a dedication to the Catholic, Jesuit principle of cura personalis – or "care of the whole person." The Medical Center includes the School of Medicine and the School of Nursing and Health Studies, both nationally ranked, the world-renowned Lombardi Comprehensive Cancer Center and the Biomedical Graduate Research Organization.

Note to editors: To download a high resolution photo of CycleBeads go to

https://gushare.georgetown.edu/xythoswfs/webui/xy-3344068_2-t_5NKOMyWv