

FACT SHEET

Standard Days Method[®] using CycleBeads[®]

What is it?

Standard Days Method[®] (SDM) is an effective, natural method of child spacing used by women and their partners. A couple can use this method if the woman has menstrual cycles 26 to 32 days long. A woman who usually gets her period every month has cycles in this range.

CycleBeads[®] are a string of colored beads that represent the woman's menstrual cycle. A woman moves a ring every day along the necklace to know if she is on a day when she can get pregnant (white beads) or not (brown beads).



How does it work?

SDM using CycleBeads works by helping a woman know which day of her menstrual cycle she is on and whether she is likely to can get pregnant that day. On days she can get pregnant, the woman and her partner either use a condom or do not have sex.

How well does it work to prevent pregnancy?

SDM using CycleBeads work very well to prevent pregnancy, especially for women whose menstrual cycles usually are between 26 and 32 days long. For every 100 women who use CycleBeads correctly for 1 year, fewer than 5 will get pregnant. This is similar to condoms, diaphragms, and other natural methods.

Advantages

- Does **not** cause any physical side effects
- Effective and reversible
- Nothing must be taken daily or at the time of sexual intercourse
- Can be used by women who cannot use, or prefer not to use, methods that contain hormones such as oral contraceptives (“the pill”), contraceptive injection (“the shot”) or the “patch”
- Can be used by women who cannot use, or prefer not to use, a birth control method that requires a medical procedure such as the IUD
- Allows both the woman and her partner to be responsible for child spacing

Disadvantages

- Offers no protection against HIV or other STIs
- Requires that the woman remember to move the CycleBeads ring every day
- Requires cooperation by the male partner (to use a condom or not have sex on white bead days)
- Is not very effective for women with menstrual cycles shorter than 26 days or longer than 32 days

Contact your health provider if:

- More than once in a year your period starts before reaching the darker brown bead or does not start the day after reaching the last brown bead
- You experience difficulty using a condom or not having sex on days you can get pregnant
- You had unprotected sex on a day you could get pregnant
- You experience symptoms of or exposure to an STD
- You want to stop using CycleBeads and start another method