

SDM® and CycleBeads®: Reaching Clients with Fertility Awareness Methods

A Trainer's Manual



The Institute for Reproductive Health,

affiliated with Georgetown University in Washington, D.C., is a leading technical resource and learning center committed to developing and increasing the availability of effective, easy-to-use, fertility awareness methods of family planning. Fertility Awareness is the knowledge of the days in a woman's menstrual cycle when she is likely to become pregnant (fertile days).

SDM and CycleBeads: Reaching Clients with Fertility Awareness Methods

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SDM and CycleBeads: Reaching Clients with Fertility Awareness Methods

A course provided by the Institute for Reproductive Health, Georgetown University

The Institute for Reproductive Health, Georgetown University, offers a two-hour training course on the Standard Days Method (SDM) for healthcare professionals with experience in family planning counseling. This course reflects the Institute and its partners' experience in training providers in 15 countries around the world over a period of 5 years. The Georgetown University School of Nursing and Health Studies, and the School of Medicine accredited the course for 2.4 CEUs and 2.0 CMEs respectively for practitioners in the U.S. The facilitator and participant materials have been thoroughly evaluated to reflect the recommendations from trainers and participants alike.

Course Description:

This training workshop provides participants the information and tools required to offer counseling to clients in the SDM and CycleBeads. The course features: (1) Information on the scientific basis of the SDM — as well as the medical and behavioral criteria for method use; (2) Counseling guidelines, tips, and practical examples of how to effectively counsel on the SDM; and (3) Useful resources for use in counseling and teaching the SDM.

Learning Objectives:

At the end of the course, participants will be able to:

- Explain how the Standard Days Method works, its scientific basis and efficacy
- Apply the method medical eligibility criteria to screen clients
- Explain to clients how CycleBeads work
- Identify key implementation aspects and discuss ways to incorporate this method into their existing family planning services

What the Course Module Includes

The two-hour training course is designed to introduce the SDM to healthcare professionals, provide participants with an opportunity to practice key aspects of SDM counseling, and discuss integration of the SDM into their family planning services.

The module includes:

- **Agenda:** presents session objectives and session content.
- **Annotated training outline:** presents a summarized version of course content for the trainer, listing all required materials for the course.
- **Lesson plans:** provide a detailed outline of material to be covered for each training activity, including materials needed, estimated time to cover materials, and instructions and recommendations for the trainer.
- **Tips for the trainer:** summarizes all the logistical and pre-training arrangements that must be completed prior to training.
- **Problem solving exercises and answer sheet:** this participant hand-out explains the instructions for the problem-solving exercise, describes six different problem “scenarios,” and includes an answer sheet for the trainer.

- **Role-playing exercises:** this participant hand-out explains the role-playing exercise and describes four different potential role plays. It also provides suggestions to the participant on how to conduct the role-play.
- **Tips for the service provider:** offers tips to the provider on common situations that arise during counseling.
- **Training evaluation form:** participants complete this form to evaluate the overall content of the course and the delivery of workshop by the instructor.

Evaluating the Curriculum

The training program includes a written evaluation of the training by participants. Evaluations are completed at each workshop, tabulated and individually analyzed by event. Results are incorporated into subsequent trainings.

An optional pre- and post-evaluation form can be used to evaluate participants' knowledge of the SDM after the training.

For courses administered in the U.S., IRH also administers an online survey to providers, 2 to 3 months after they take the course. The purpose of this survey is to learn about providers' experience offering the SDM, whether the training enabled them to offer counseling in this method, and if the job aids have been useful for the counseling and handling any challenges with their clients.

Evaluation tools are included in this curriculum only, in the event a program is interested in evaluating their own adaptations of this curriculum.

Tips for the Trainer

- ✓ **Knowledge of the Menstrual Cycle.** Don't take for granted that service providers know how to calculate the length of the menstrual cycle. Often people, including service providers confuse menstrual period with menstrual cycle. This course does not include a specific activity for discussing the menstrual cycle. However, while explaining the SDM criteria (cycles 26 to 32 days long or periods that come about a month apart) mention briefly the differences between these two terms. Simple language to describe it is included in the corresponding activity.
- ✓ **Talking about Sex During Fertile Days.** Nor should you assume that service providers have the training or experience talking with clients about couple-related and sexuality issues that should be discussed during the counseling. Use at least one activity to from this course to address this topic in counseling. Given the length of this course, you are only able to raise awareness about the need to be prepared to discuss sex during the fertile time when offering the SDM to clients. Encourage providers to complete on their own additional reading included in the corresponding course activity.
- ✓ **Confidence in the Effectiveness of the Method.** Always remember that, like any other method, the SDM is not for every woman. Participants can bring up the special or extreme situations and questions to challenge the validity of this method. Don't get defensive and don't feel you need to answer all questions. Be prepared before the training by reading the background information on the underlying science of the SDM and the overview of how it was developed and tested. Find this information in the SDM Field Notes and the Technical Brief included in this manual.
- ✓ **Questions about the Fertile Window.** Clinicians often would question information on the timing of ovulation. The SDM relies on a set of probabilities related to ovulation occurring at mid-cycle. Historically, text books cite ovulation occurring 12 days before menses. More-recent studies have shown that there is actually a RANGE of days in which ovulation is likely, with mid-point being the most likely. Ninety percent of ovulations occur within 4 days prior and 4 days after ovulation. The analysis of probabilities of ovulation during different days in the cycle is based on this more recent information

Materials and Supplies for SDM 2-Hour Training Workshop

Participant Materials

Right side of folder:

- Agenda
- Provider job aids packet
- Powerpoint presentation
- Case studies : cycle length and regularity
- Evaluation form (required if receiving credit)
- Post test (required if receiving credit)

Left side of folder

- CycleBeads set
- Client Brochure
- SDM Efficacy Article
- Selected published articles (NFPRHA, Ob-Gyn News, Contraceptive Technology, Global Health Council Briefs, USAID Briefs) depending on the audience
- SDM Field Notes or Technical Brief
- CycleBeads order forms
- Bookmark with www.irh.org for access to additional materials

Notepad and pencil

Name tags

Sign-in Sheet (only if course is offered with credit)

Trainer Materials

- Participants Folder (as above)
- Equipment: TV & VCR, computer & LCD projector
- Flipchart and markers
- CycleBeads video and SDM Training video
- Annotated PowerPoint presentation
- Samples of materials for display to be selected according to audience

Standard Days Method:

A Training Workshop for Health Care Professionals

AGENDA

Session Objectives

- Introduce the Standard Days Method (SDM)
- Discuss eligibility criteria for the SDM
- Practice selected aspects of SDM counseling
- Discuss integration of SDM in services

Session Agenda

- I. Introduction – What is the SDM?
 - Review agenda, participant packet and process of this session. Sign-in.
 - Present CycleBeads video
 - Provide brief introduction of SDM complemented with PP presentation
 - Q&A
- II. Counseling in the SDM – What's covered in a counseling session?
 - PowerPoint overheads with key aspects covered during counseling session
 - Group discussion (who can/who cannot use the SDM)
 - PowerPoint overheads of the eligibility criteria (biological and behavioral criteria)
- III. Practicing counseling and using provider job aids – How do I offer counseling?
 - Participants resolve case studies
 - Cases resolved/feedback provided in plenary
 - Participants role play
 - Process the role-play activity in plenary
- IV. Issues at follow-up visits – What to expect at subsequent visits?
 - PP overheads with possible issues
 - Case studies resolved in plenary
- V. Evaluation and Closing
 - Discuss integration of SDM in service (promotion, counseling, education)
 - Complete participant evaluation form
 - Explain the process for obtaining a certificate, CEUs, or CMEs.

Training Outline

Learning Objectives	Content Outline	Time	Teaching Methodology
Describe the biological basis of the Standard Days Method (SDM), how it works and its interface with other family planning methods.	Basis of fertility awareness-based methods. Determining fertile window based on probabilities of pregnancy given the life span of ovum and sperm and timing of ovulation. Calculation of menstrual cycle length. Interface of SDM with other FP methods.	15 minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lecture w/slides • Practical exercise • Q&A • Case studies analysis • Group discussion
Describe the key research findings from study completed to establish the efficacy rate of the SDM.	Description of development and testing process for the SDM. Characteristics and results of the SDM prospective multi-center efficacy trial done in Peru, Bolivia, and the Philippines. Results from operation research studies, user profile, service delivery settings.	15 minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lecture w/slides • Review of reference materials
Describe the SDM medical and behavioral criteria and demonstrate correct application of these criteria through case studies analysis.	Detailed description of medical criterion: regular menstrual cycles 26 to 32 days long; and behavioral criterion: couple's ability to avoid unprotected sex during 12 fertile days. Discussion of circumstances that may affect menstrual cycle length: recent use of some hormonal methods, history of irregular cycles, postpartum, breastfeeding etc. Review of case studies for analysis and resolution using job aids.	40 minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lecture w/slides • Review of job aids • Resolution of case studies using job aids • Q&A – group discussion
Observe the process for screening clients interested in the SDM.	Observe demonstration followed by Q&A session and discussion of counseling aspects: Assess, Teach, Support Introduction of provider job aids for screening clients.	40 minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstration • Review reference materials • Q&A
Describe the correct use of Cyclebeads, the visual tool that is used to track the cycle days when using the SDM	Detailed description of how to use Cyclebeads following key content in "cue card".	15 minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Video • Role Play • Use of CycleBeads
Discuss the advantages and disadvantages to using the Standard Days method of Natural Family Planning Address documentation issues to ensure appropriate recording of client information	Client preference for non-hormonal methods, easy to use, inexpensive, fertile days need a second method. Does not protect against sexually transmitted infections.	30 minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review reference materials • Brainstorming and discussion

References:

- SDM Training Curricula, 2003 Institute for Reproductive Health
- Arévalo M, Jennings V, Sinai I. Efficacy of a new method of family planning: the Standard Days Method, Contraception. 2002; 65: 333-338.
- Contraceptive Technology 18th edition, 2004
- Selected reports from SDM Operations Research studies, 2003, Institute for Reproductive Health
- Cachan, J. Lundgren, R. Reference Guide for Counseling Clients in the SDM, 2003

Lesson Plan Activity I

Introduction – What is the SDM? (35 mins.)

Introduction

The main objective of this activity is to provide a thorough overview of key aspects of the Standard Days Method, including:

- A description of the SDM scientific basis
- What the SDM is and how it works with CycleBeads
- A discussion of its efficacy and key aspects and results of the SDM effectiveness study
- SDM service delivery
- What are the components of SDM counseling

A slide presentation in PowerPoint is used to cover the above points. This presentation requires very small adaptations as suggested in some of the slides. Also, a 4-minute video is shown to describe how to use CycleBeads. This activity should be covered in 35 minutes, including Q&A session.

Materials

- PowerPoint Presentation
- CycleBeads
- Video: *CycleBeads, An Easy, Effective Way of Using the Standard Days Method*

Instructions

1. After trainers and participant introductions are completed, tell participants that you will offer a presentation that highlights key aspects of the Standard Days Method, to review what they have learned from the pre-reading materials.
2. Follow the script for the presentation and stop after the third slide to introduce CycleBeads and present the video. Resume the PowerPoint presentation after the video is shown.
3. Always keep the flipchart sheet showing the method eligibility criteria and criteria for starting the Standard Days Method on a wall of the classroom as a reference for the participants.
4. The PowerPoint presentation covers the introductory aspects of the SDM, CycleBeads and the Study. Stop the presentation at slide 14 to invite participants to comment or ask questions.
5. Continue with the next activity.

Recommendations to the facilitator

This presentation is critical for clarifying any misconceptions and negative attitudes toward natural methods. In this activity the participants bring up their overall doubts and concerns about natural methods, which you should be prepared to resolve.

Because the Standard Days Method is a newly developed method, it is important to present its characteristics and scientific basis as well as the study establishing the method's efficacy. It may be possible to have participants in the audience who doubt the effectiveness of natural methods. Generally, the reason is that providers are not familiar with the underlying scientific basis of these methods or that they do not have correct and completed information of the methods efficacy rates. It is important to mention that the majority of women who use periodic abstinence to avoid a pregnancy often do not know when they are most likely to get pregnant—making their efforts to avoid pregnancy often unsuccessful. This results in very high failures because users don't know how to identify a woman's fertile phase.

PowerPoint Presentation on the SDM



Standard Days Method and CycleBeads

A Simple Fertility Awareness-Based Approach to Family Planning



Learning Objectives

At the end of the workshop, participants will be able to:

- Describe how the SDM works
- Summarize the scientific basis and efficacy of the method
- Screen clients to determine SDM eligibility
- Explain to clients how to use CycleBeads
- Identify key issues in SDM service delivery

Standard Days Method

- Identifies days 8-19 of the cycle as fertile
- Is appropriate for women with menstrual cycles between 26 and 32 days long
- Helps a couple avoid unplanned pregnancy by knowing which days they should not have unprotected sex
- Helps a couple plan pregnancy by knowing which days they should have sex

CycleBeads

The SDM is used with CycleBeads™, a color-coded string of beads to help a woman:

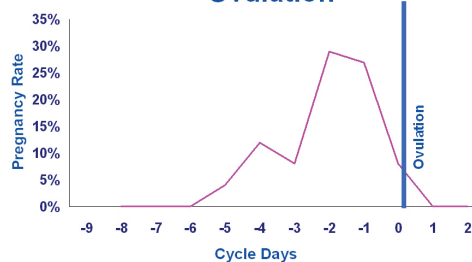
- Track her cycle days
- Know when she is fertile
- Monitor her cycle length



CycleBeads™



Probability of Pregnancy from Intercourse on Days Relative to Ovulation



Lesson Plan **Activity II**

Counseling in the SDM – What’s covered in a counseling session? (10 min.)

Introduction

The objective of this activity is to give participants a general overview of counseling in the Standard Days Method. Specifically, in this activity you will:

- introduce the essential components of a Standard Days Method counseling session, and the job aids that support each component.
- examine the SDM medical and behavioral eligibility criteria, including exceptions to and considerations for method use.
- The three components of SDM counseling will be discussed.

Materials

- PowerPoint Presentation
- Provider Job Aids Packet

Instructions

1. Resume the PowerPoint presentation with Slides that cover aspects about counseling. Counseling in the Standard Days Method involves:
 - Helping clients determine if the method is appropriate for them
 - Providing clients with the with the information and tools needed to understand and use the method correctly
 - Helping clients manage the fertile days with their partners
 - Encouraging clients to return for additional information and services as needed
2. Show and explain to the participants each of the provider job aids (Job Aids for Initial Visit and CycleBeads Cue Card) that can be found in their copy of the Job Aids Packet.
3. Follow the script for the presentation and point participants to the pertinent pages in the Provider Job Aids Packet. Read the two basic method eligibility criteria.
 - First explain the biological criterion (regular cycles of 26 to 32 days long). Explain ways to determine if the woman’s cycles are the right length with simple questions. Continue explaining the circumstances that can affect the cycle length (previous use of contraceptives, pregnancy and breastfeeding). Invite the participants to ask questions and answer these. Ask participants if they think there are any other reasons why a woman should not use the SDM and discuss their comments in light of the biological criterion.
 - Second explain the behavioral criterion (avoid unprotected sex on fertile days). Discuss the need to probe, early on during the counseling session, for any couple issues that may hinder the use of the SDM. It is helpful to mention situations that require counseling, i.e., unfaithful partner, frequently traveling partner, partner that is against family planning, etc. If such situations are chronic within the couple then this is not the appropriate method for them.
4. Answer any questions. Mention that, in the following activity, the participants will have the chance to put into practice the different components of Standard Days Method counseling that were just analyzed.

Recommendations to the facilitator

When reviewing the criteria for cycle length, it is important to recall that the cycle is calculated by counting all days from the first day of the period until the day before the next period. However, for establishing if the woman's cycles are the right length, there is no need to calculate her cycle length. Simple questions such as: "do you get your period about once a month" or "are your periods about a month apart" are close indicators that the woman's cycles are within this length. Explain that CycleBeads provide an easy way for the women to monitor if her cycles are the right length. Emphasize the importance of explaining to her how to keep checking that her periods come on time to use the beads. In the next activity this message will be discussed in more detail.

It is also important to go over the sample questions providers can ask clients to help her determine her cycle length. These questions are found in the Provider Job Aids Packet.

One option the trainer should consider in this activity is doing a demonstration of the full counseling session to familiarize participants with the key aspects in SDM counseling and the job aids and model appropriate counseling skills.

ASSESS if the SDM is appropriate for the woman and her partner

- Determine if the client's menstrual cycle length is 26 to 32 days (periods are about a month apart)
- Determine if there is any circumstance or condition that may affect the woman's cycle length (recent pregnancy or use of hormonal methods).
- Help the client decide whether this method will work for her and her partner (can she and her partner use condoms or abstain from sex during the fertile days)
- Determine when the woman can start using the SDM. If she remembers the date of her last period, she can start using the method now by placing the ring on the bead for today. If she does not remember the date of her last period, she can begin using the method the day her next period starts.

TEACH the client how the SDM works and check her understanding

- Describe the SDM to the client and explain how to use CycleBeads.
- Confirm that the client understood the key points for using the method, repeat, and clarify.

SUPPORT the couple's use of the SDM

- Identify problems the couple may have using the SDM and encourage behaviors that will support correct use of the method.
- Help the couple identify possible solutions to the problems they have identified. Explore, with the client, ways of talking with her partner about the method and how to handle and negotiate avoiding unprotected sex on days when she can get pregnant.
- Remind the client to return to the clinic if she has questions or is not satisfied with the method. Schedule a follow-up visit if necessary.

Lesson Plan **Activity III**

Problem Solving Case Studies (20 mins.)

Introduction

The main objective of this activity is to give the participants the chance to put into practice their knowledge of the menstrual cycle and how to apply the criteria for SDM eligibility and for starting the method. As they solve the cases, they have the opportunity to clear any doubts and reflect on situations that occur in the “real world” of counselling.

In this activity the screening component of Standard Days Method counselling will be analysed. This component includes:

- Determining whether the woman’s menstrual cycles are within the right range.
- Determining if there are any circumstances or conditions that may affect the woman’s menstrual cycle.
- Determining whether the method is suitable for the woman and her partner.
- Helping the client determine when she can start using the method.

Materials:

- Provider Job Aid (Screening Checklist)
- Case Studies
- Flipchart paper or overheads with SDM criteria

Instructions:

1. Introduce this activity by telling participants that they will be analyzing and solving case studies of potential SDM users. Distribute the case studies among all participants. Ask participants to turn the person next to them and work in pairs to solve two case studies during 10 minutes.
2. Tell participants that in this activity they will practice:
 - applying the SDM eligibility criteria,
 - calculating the length of the menstrual cycle,
 - applying the criteria for starting the SDM, and
 - using the provider job aids.
3. Indicate to participants that when solving the case studies, they should use the:
 - Job Aid—Screening Checklist to establish if the client meets the SDM eligibility criteria
 - Criteria for Starting the Method to establish when can the client start using the method
4. Always keep the flipchart sheet showing the method eligibility criteria and criteria for starting the Standard Days Method on a wall of the classroom as a reference for the participants.
5. After 10 minutes, reconvene all participants to review the solution to the case studies. Invite volunteers to read a case at a time, explain how the case was solved and comment on any issues, difficulties or questions that may have come up while solving the cases.
6. As volunteers present their solutions to the case studies, invite others to share their solutions if they are different, clarify any misinformation related to the SDM eligibility criteria and the criteria for starting the method.

Role-Play Case Studies (35 mins.)

Introduction

The purpose of this activity is to enable participants to put into practice their skills in applying the criteria for SDM eligibility and for starting the method. The same aspects of SDM counseling will be covered, however during a role-play situation.

Materials:

- Provider Job Aids (Screening Checklist)
- CycleBeads Cue Card
- Case Studies
- Flipchart paper or overheads with SDM criteria

Instructions

1. Remind participants that in the previous activity they had the opportunity to analyze and apply the SDM criteria in problem-solving exercises. Indicate that they will now practice applying these criteria during a simulated counseling session. Ask participants to use the Job Aids Screening Checklist, and the CycleBeads Cue Card when completing the role-play exercise.
2. Group the participants into pairs and give each pair two cases to perform as a role-play. Explain that:
 - they will have 20 minutes (10 min. per participant) to perform the role-plays, during which each person will have play the role of the counselor while their partner acts as the client.
 - participants who are acting as clients should not share information about their cases nor give all the information straight away to the providers, but to wait until the provider asks the questions. The information in the case study will guide those acting as clients on how to answer the provider questions.
3. Upon completing the exercise, bring the group back together and analyze all the solved cases. Invite different participants to share the solutions to their cases. Fill in any gaps in the information and clarify as necessary. Always keep the flipchart sheet showing the method eligibility criteria and criteria for starting the Standard Days Method on a wall of the classroom as a reference for the participants.
4. To close this activity, ask participants to share their general comments, showing the following questions written on the flipchart “Role-play Discussion Questions” as your guide:
 - How did you feel applying the eligibility criteria? Was it easy or complicated?
 - Were you confronted by any challenge? Explain
 - Did you (and your partner) use the job aids? Were they helpful?

Instructions: Please analyze two case studies and apply the SDM eligibility criteria. When solving these case studies, use the **Screening Checklist for Initial Visit** located in the **SDM Job Aids Packet**. Spend 5 minutes solving the case study assigned to you and answering the following questions:

- Can she use the Standard Days Method? Why or why not?
- If the method is suitable for her, when could she start using it?
- What are your recommendations to this client?

Read the case information and answer the questions for each case.

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Case 1 — Lori

Date of last menstrual period: April 8

Date of visit to the clinic: April 14

Note: Lori says she is very regular. Her periods come each month, when she expects them. (She looks at a calendar and points to April 8, the first day of her last period. Lori and her husband are both interested in this natural method. She is not breastfeeding and has never used a hormonal method of family planning.

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Case 2 — Maggie

Date of last menstrual period: Beginning of the month (does not remember exact date)

Date of visit to clinic: May 20

Note: Maggie and her husband are very interested in the SDM because it is natural and there are no side effects. She does not know the exact day of her last period. However, she says her periods always come when she expects them. Her periods come about a month apart, around the same time each month. She has not been using a family planning method and has been married only a few months.

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Case 3 — Gaby

Date of last menstrual period: Does not know

Date of visit to the clinic: February 14

Note: Gaby has heard of CycleBeads. Her older sister has a string of these beads and likes the method very much. Gabriela does not remember the first day of her last period. She does not know when to expect her next period. She does not usually pay attention to when her period comes and doesn't really know if she is regular or not. She would like to start using CycleBeads right away.

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Case 4 — Pat

Date of last menstrual period: March 31

Date of visit to the clinic: April 15

Note: The first day of Pats last period was March 31. There are times when her periods come about the same time each month. However, usually she does not know when to expect her period. Sometimes her periods come about every month and a half. Sometimes two months or more go by and she still has not had her period. Her periods have always been irregular. She and her husband communicate well and agree that they do not want to have children at this time.

Case 5 — Anne

Date of last menstrual period: April 2
Date she expects next period: Next month about the same time
Date of visit to the clinic: April 15

Note: Anne knows the first day of her last period was April 2, because it was the day before her daughters 4th birthday. But usually she doesn't keep track. She thinks she expects her next period at the beginning of the next month, but is not sure. Her periods are pretty regular. More or less, she says, I think I'm regular. She has come to the city for family planning and lives far away from any health services. She and her husband communicate well and want to use a natural method.

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Case 6 — Vicki

Date last menstrual period: October 25
Date of visit to clinic: October 30

Note: Vicki stopped using oral contraceptives a couple of months ago. Her cycles prior to using the pill were regular every month, and they are regular now.

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Case 7 — Emma

Date last menstrual period: May 19
Date of visit to clinic: May 28

Note: Emma has been breastfeeding her son for the last 15 months, and she started getting her period regularly about eight months ago. Emma's husband travels often, at least twice a month and for several days at a time. They have been using condoms for the last several months, but don't like having to use them all the time. They both have decided to use a natural method.

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Case 8 — Martha

Date last menstrual period: October 14
Date of visit to clinic: November 29

Note: Martha has used the 3-month contraceptive injection for about 2 years. Her injection was due about 6 weeks ago. Her period is often very light and sometimes doesn't come at all. However, before she began using the 3-month injection, her period came each month. She wants a natural method because she is overweight and thinks it is because of the injection. She also doesn't like that she doesn't get her period regularly.

Answer Sheet for Problem-Solving Case Studies

	Case 1 Lori	Case 2 Maggie	Case 3 Gaby	Case 4 Pat	Case 5 Anne	Case 6 Vicki	Case 7 Emma	Case 8 Martha
1. Can she use the Standard Days Method?								
2. If the method is suitable for her, when could she start using it?								
3. What are your recommendations to this client?								

Answer Sheet for Case Studies

	Case 1 Lori	Case 2 Maggie	Case 3 Gaby	Case 4 Pat	Case 5 Anne
What is the length of her menstrual cycle?	28 days	Probably within 26 to 32-day range	Unknown	Unknown	Probably within 26 to 32-day range
Can she use the Standard Days Method?	Yes	Yes	Not at this time	No, because she has irregular cycles	Yes
If the method is suitable for her, when could she start using it?	Immediately	Wait until her next period starts.	Not yet	The method is not suitable for her.	Immediately!
What do you recommend for this situation?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Give standard advice. • Reinforce monitoring cycle length over time. Make sure she knows how to check for short or long cycles. • Confirm that both partners can avoid unprotected sex on her fertile days. • Place ring on the correct bead. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tell her to put the ring on the red bead on the first day of her next period. • Give standard advice. • Reinforce monitoring cycle length over time. Make sure she knows how to check for short or long cycles. • Confirm that both partners can avoid unprotected sex on her fertile days and agree how to handle these days. • If she has already had sex during this cycle, explain that she may already be pregnant. • Abstain or use another method until the first day of her next period, when she starts the SDM. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Show her how to track her cycles (with a calendar or CycleBeads) • Advise using another method of family planning or abstaining until she has determined that her cycles are 26 to 32 days long. • If her cycles are within this range, she can begin using the SDM on the first day of her next period. (Or, advise her to return to the clinic once she has two periods about a month apart. Then teach her how to use the method.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide other family planning options or refer. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Give standard advice. • Reinforce monitoring cycle length over time. Make sure she knows how to check for short or long cycles. • Confirm that both partners can avoid unprotected sex on her fertile days and agree how to handle these days. • Place the ring on the correct bead. • If she has already had sex during this cycle, explain that she may already be pregnant.

¹ If the provider (or woman) is concerned that her cycles may not be within the 26 to 32 day range, or if home visits are an option, the provider can first teach the woman how to track her cycle length. Then, once the woman has a 26 to 32 day cycle she can begin using the SDM on the first day of bleeding.

Answer Sheet for Problem Studies

	Case 6 Vicki	Case 7 Emma	Case 8 Martha
What is the length of her menstrual cycle?	30 days	28 days	Unknown
Can she use the Standard Days Method?	Yes	Yes	Not at this time
If the method is suitable for her, when could she start using it?	Immediately	Immediately	Not yet
What do you recommend for this situation?	<p>Standard Advice.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor cycle length over time. Make sure she knows how to check for short or long cycles. • Confirm that both partners can avoid unprotected sex on her fertile days. • Place the ring on the correct bead. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emphasize discussing the method with her partner and agreeing in advance how to handle her fertile days. • Place the ring on the correct bead. • If she already had sex during this cycle explain that she may already be pregnant. Emphasize explanation on checking for short or long cycles. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wait for her periods to resume and to have a cycle within the 26 to 32-day range. • Use another method of family planning in the meantime.

Role-Play Case Studies:

Determining if the method is appropriate for the woman and her partner.

In the previous activity you analyzed and applied the SDM criteria in problem-solving exercises. Now you will have the opportunity to practice applying these criteria during a simulated counseling session. You will also explain how to use CycleBeads as an aid for using the SDM.

Instructions:

1. Working in pairs, select a case in which you will play the role of the client while your partner plays the role of the provider. Don't tell your partner the case you have selected.
2. Use your Job Aid for the Initial Visit and CycleBeads Cue Card.
3. Participants who are acting as clients should not to share information about their cases nor give all the information to the counselor at the beginning of the session. The information in the case study will guide those acting as clients on how to answer the counselor questions.
4. Take 10 minutes per case. When finished, switch roles and complete a second case.

Counselor:

- Help the client decide whether this method is appropriate for her and her partner.
- Explain to her how CycleBeads work.

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Case 1.

Leonor is 33 years old, is married and has three children. She heard a health educator in her community talk about a new family planning method. She heard this method can help her know when she's fertile and it does not require taking pills or using any devices. She came to the clinic on June 18 to learn more about it.

Leonor tells the counselor that her period comes every month and her last one started on June 8. Her youngest daughter is 20 months old. Leonor is no longer breastfeeding, and she is not using any family planning method at the moment. Her husband is using withdrawal. Neither she nor her husband wants to have more children, but neither wants to use contraceptives.

When the counselor asks, she tells the counselor that she gets along fairly well with her husband—they bicker but they don't have serious arguments. He is a hard worker, a good father and doesn't drink or smoke. She feels that she can talk to her husband in general, but they don't discuss sex.

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Case 2.

Rosa has been using the 3-month contraceptive injection. Her next injection was due 2 weeks ago. She comes to the clinic on November 14 to ask for the Standard Days Method. She tells the counselor that her period is very sparse and sometimes doesn't come. Last month, her period came October 21. Before using injections, her period came every month. She and her partner would like to plan a pregnancy for next year. She wants to use a family planning method but doesn't wish to take pills or go back to using injections.

.....

Case 3.

Isabel has a partner, although they don't live together. She came to the clinic on February 27. After using the pill for nearly a year, she stopped taking her last pack of pills last week. She decided to stop using this method because she has been having headaches and was concerned about side effects. Also, her partner travels and they don't see each other for a month at a time. Before using the pill, she used condoms, but as they are a stable couple, she stopped using them when she started the pill.

She wishes to try the natural method of family planning the clinic is offering. Isabel doesn't keep track of when her period starts but she is sure they've always come every month, even before she started taking the pill. Her last period started February 16. When the counselor asks about her sexual life, she says that she is not seeing anyone else and thinks her partner is faithful and is careful, although sometimes he drinks too much.

• • • • •

Case 4.

Laura is 26 years old, married and has a 2-year-old daughter. She learned about CycleBeads from her sister, who has been using them for about 2 months. Since her daughter was born, she had an IUD inserted but wishes to have it taken out because of the bleeding. She wants to have a break for a while to see whether the bleeding stops. Before she had an IUD, her period lasted 4 days. But now with the IUD she bleeds heavily during her period and often has spotting at other times.

Her last period was June 13. Today, June 19, she is not menstruating and wants to know whether she can use another method.

When the counselor asks how she and her husband would deal with protection during the white-bead days, she says that since she has been using the IUD, she hasn't bothered to use anything. Also, with so much bleeding, having intercourse bothers her.

Lesson Plan **Activity IV**

Teaching clients how to use CycleBeads with the Standard Days Method

Introduction

During this activity participants will observe a demonstration on how to use CycleBeads. Participants also will take turns in role playing sessions explaining use of CycleBeads as part of the second component of the SDM counseling: ***“Teaching the Client How to Use the Method”***. Participants will also provide feedback to one another using a feedback checklist.

Materials:

- Provider Cue Card for CycleBeads
- PowerPoint slides or video

Instructions:

- Use the video or do a demonstration on how CycleBeads are used.

Guidelines for Offering Clear Information About the Standard Days Method

- Use simple sentences and short words.
- Use language the client can understand.
- Use pictures and printed material, if available.
- Show the CycleBeads right from the beginning and let the client touch and hold them.
- Stop from time to time to check that the client understands.
- Ask questions to make sure the information you have given her is clear.
- Repeat instructions and key messages, especially at the end of the session.

Lesson Plan **Activity V**

Helping the couple use the SDM effectively

Introduction

Materials:

- PowerPoint slides or Video

Instructions:

- Using the PowerPoint slides or video identify challenges the couple might face using the SDM. What are some solutions?

Guidelines for Offering Clear Information About the Standard Days Method

- Use simple sentences and short words.
- Use language the client can understand.
- Use pictures and printed material, if available.
- Show the CycleBeads right from the beginning and let the client touch and hold them.
- Stop from time to time to check that the client understands.
- Ask questions to make sure the information you have given her is clear.
- Repeat instructions and key messages, especially at the end of the session.

Discussion Questions

Discuss these cases in your respective groups

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Maggie and John's case – Recent use of Emergency Contraception

- What are ways in which you could engage this couple in discussing how to handle their fertile days?
- What questions would you ask Maggie and John to help them figure out how they will handle the fertile days?
- How would you feel about this couple using the SDM?
- If they decide to start using the method, would you schedule a follow-up visit? Why or why not?

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Linda's case – A woman with Couple Communication issues

- How would you feel asking these kinds of questions to a client in a similar situation?
- Is there something else you would do as a counselor?

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Tracy's Case – A woman at Risk of a STI

- Discuss this situation in your group and continue with the counseling.
- Be prepared to share with other participants specifics on how you handled Tracy's case.

Issues at follow-up visits – What to expect at subsequent visits?

Introduction

The main objective of this activity is to give the participants the opportunity to discuss issues that may come up during follow-up (either a previously scheduled visit or a spontaneous visit) and to review the assessment criteria after the client has used the method for one or more cycles.

Materials:

- PowerPoint slides

Instructions:

1. Using the Powerpoint slides related to Follow-up Visit, walk participants through the steps covered at a follow-up visit.
2. Give an example of a client who has used the CycleBeads for a month and returns for a follow-up visit. Ask the participants, “What do you need to know in order to determine whether the Standard Days Method is still suitable for her and her partner?” Refer to the Provider Job Aid (checklist for follow-up visit) and complement participant contributions with any information that may be missing.
3. Refer participants to their handouts when discussing issues that may arise during a client’s follow-up visit.

Participant Evaluation

Standard Days Method: A Training for Healthcare Providers

Training Workshop (location, date)

Please complete this form using the following rating:

1 – VERY WELL 2- ADEQUATELY 3 – SOMEWHAT ADEQUATELY 4 – POORLY

Listed below are the educational objectives for this workshop.

Please rate the extent to which you were able to meet each of the objectives:

Objectives	Rating
1. Understand the scientific basis for the Standard Days Method.	
2. Describe the multi-site research conducted in three countries that demonstrated method efficacy.	
3. Describe method eligibility criteria the Standard Days Method of family planning.	
4. Describe how CycleBeads work for the use of the Standard Days Method.	
5. Feel prepared to offer information on the SDM.	
6. Feel able to use the job aids to find information on criteria and method use.	
Please evaluate the faculty in terms of content and presentation:	
7. Instructors were knowledgeable of the topic.	
8. Instructors had an effective presentation style.	
9. Content was relevant to the objectives.	
10. Teaching methods were effective.	
11. Handout materials were useful.	
12. Counseling tools and job aids were helpful.	
13. The physical environment was conducive to learning.	
14. The amount of time allotted for this workshop was: About Right _____ Too Short _____ Too Long _____	

Participant Evaluation Continued

15. What topic or aspect of this workshop was the most valuable for the work you do?

16. And what topic/aspect was the least valuable for the work you do?

17. What suggestions do you have for future training workshops?

18. Is there any additional information you need to meet your needs on this topic?

Thank you for your input! Your comments will be used to improve this course.

Participant Assessment (with answer key for the trainer)

Standard Days Method: A Training for Healthcare Providers

Training Workshop

Instructions: Read the question and circle the correct answer.

1. A woman is more likely to get pregnant:
 - a. At the beginning of her cycle
 - b. Midway through the cycle**
 - c. Ten days before menstruating
2. A woman who is breastfeeding can consider using the Standard Days Method (SDM):
 - a. As soon as her baby is 6 months old
 - b. As soon as she starts menstruating again
 - c. Once she has had four consecutive regular periods**
3. To use the SDM correctly:
 - a. The couple needs to be able to discuss when to avoid unprotected intercourse
 - b. The woman should move the ring every day so she knows on which days she is most likely to get pregnant
 - c. The woman and her partner should avoid unprotected sex on white-bead days when she can get pregnant
 - d. All the above conditions should be met**
4. Which of the following IS NOT a characteristic of the SDM?
 - a. It doesn't protect couples against STIs
 - b. It is natural, it doesn't have any side effects
 - c. Several people can use the same CycleBeads**
 - d. It can foster good couple communication
5. A woman who was taking the pill can use the SDM
 - a. While taking the pill
 - b. After last three periods have been about a month apart (26-32 day cycles)
 - c. As soon as she starts her period after stopping the pill**
 - d. Three months after she stops taking the pill
6. To use the SDM the woman must have menstrual cycles lasting:
 - a. 5 to 7 days
 - b. 20 to 30 days
 - c. 26 to 32 days**
 - d. 28 days

7. What should a SDM client do every time she gets her period?
 - a. Move the ring to the first white bead
 - b. Move the ring to the red bead and mark her calendar**
 - c. Move the ring to the red bead and see a provider
 - d. See a provider
8. What do the brown beads represent?
 - a. Days when the woman can get pregnant
 - b. Days when pregnancy is very unlikely
 - c. Days when the man and woman can have intercourse without worrying about pregnancy
 - d. b. and c.**
9. What do the white beads represent?
 - a. Days with menstrual bleeding
 - b. Days when the woman can get pregnant**
 - c. Days when the woman cannot get pregnant
 - d. Days when the couple can have intercourse without worry of getting pregnant
10. If the woman does not start her period the day after she places the ring on the last brown bead, what should she do?
 - a. Move the ring to the red bead
 - b. Use the calendar to count the days
 - c. Continue having unprotected sex without worrying about getting pregnant
 - d. See her provider**
11. If the woman starts her period before placing the ring on the dark brown bead, what should she do?
 - a. Continue having unprotected sex without worrying about getting pregnant
 - b. Move the ring to the red bead and see the provider**
 - c. Continue to move the ring until she gets to the last brown bead
12. It has been shown that the effectiveness of the SDM is:
 - a. 70%
 - b. 95%**
 - c. 75%

14. Describe the two conditions that must be met for a woman and her partner to use the SDM:

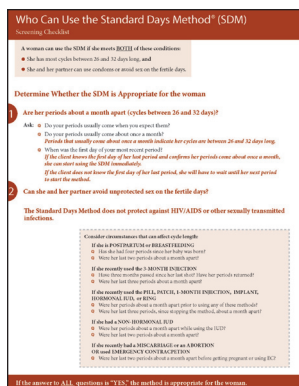
15. Mention two situations in which the SDM might not be suitable for a woman:

Instructions: Read all the statements about the tasks an SDM provider normally performs. Decide how comfortable you would feel when performing each task. Mark the box that best describes your level of comfort.

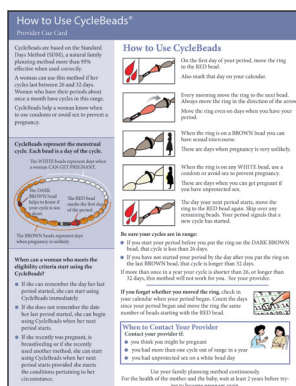
I would feel:	Comfortable	Relatively Comfortable	Uncomfortable
16. Asking a client questions about her menstrual cycle and other reproductive health aspects to establish whether the SDM could be suitable for her.			
17. Teaching a client to use CycleBeads.			
18. Asking questions to confirm whether a client understood how the SDM works and whether she is satisfied with her choice.			
19. Exploring with a client aspects of her sexuality and relationship with her partner that may affect correct use of the SDM.			
20. Talking with a client about managing the fertile white-bead days.			

Appendices

Job Aids used in SDM Counseling



Screening Checklist



CycleBeads Cue Card



CycleBeads Instruction