Basic Infertile Pattern Other than Dry

While breastfeeding or after discontinuing hormonal contraceptives (such as the Pill, Norplant, or Depo-Provera) a long preovulatory phase may occur. There may be a continuous discharge or an unchanging pattern by tissue, sensation, or cervix which remains “essentially the same” day-after-day. This discharge might be considered infertile. To establish a Basic Infertile Pattern (BIP) other than dry, careful charting is critical.

- Each day chart the tissue symbols and traits of any discharge (e.g., M or EW-M plus the amount of stretch, transparency, color, gliding, bleeding or spotting) and how often you observe it. Charting the sensation and cervix may assist in establishing a BIP.
- Eliminate any irritants which promote a vaginal discharge.
- Rule out a possible vaginal or cervical infection with your healthcare provider.

After 2 to 4 weeks of experience charting your traits, the continuous discharge may be counted as “dry” if it is “essentially the same — day-after-day.” Do the following:

1. Each day, chart the discharge and its traits, and how often observed. Decide whether the observations are “the same” as before or “different.”

2. The “continuous discharge” can count as “dry” if it is “essentially the same” as it usually is day-after-day. Intercourse is available on non-consecutive evenings only. This provides an opportunity to notice any change.

3. Assume fertility with any “change” and until a evening of Peak+4. Use a wavy line to box off the times of possible fertility on your chart.
   - “Change” means any “difference” in amount, stretchability, transparency, color, frequency of observed discharge, or any difference in sensation or cervix.
   - You must decide what is “the same” and what is “different.” Put a check mark (√) on the row above the tissue observation if the day is “essentially the same.” The last day of “change” is considered Peak Day.

4. If there is a Peak Day without a subsequent temperature rise:
   - Apply the Basic Mucus Rule: infertility may be assumed the evening of Pk+4.
   - The four days past Peak must be a less fertile sign (such as the “essentially the same pattern” or dry days) for infertility to be assumed on the evening of Pk+4.
   - Continue the detailed charting of traits.
   - Assume infertility on non-consecutive evenings only and assume fertility again with any “change.”

5. If a temperature rise occurs, apply the Sympto-thermal Rule or Temperature-only Rule, and assume infertility until the end of the cycle. At this point your circumstance may have changed, and you need to consult with your NFP Provider for new guidelines.

Reference Note: Applying the Basic Mucus Rule to a “continuous discharge” may have a higher pregnancy rate than when “dry” is the Basic Infertile Pattern.
Below is an example with the Basic Infertile Pattern identified.

Determine the Basic Infertile Pattern on the chart.
- On the chart below indicate which days are “essentially the same” with a check mark (✓) on the line above the tissue row.
- Mark Peak Days(s) with a PK over that day. Write in the four days past Peak Day as well.
- Enclose the Possibly Fertile Time with wavy lines.
- Check the answer on the next page.

Before applying this guideline to your own chart, review the application with your NFP Provider.
Essay Questions

1. If you wish to avoid pregnancy, intercourse is permitted:
   _____ mornings only  _____ evenings only  _____ anytime.

2. If you observe discharge on the tissue on the day after intercourse, how should you chart it?

3. If you eliminate seminal fluid after intercourse (e.g., Kegel exercises), can you assume infertility the day after intercourse if it is dry?

4. When are you supposed to check by tissue?

5. What if you forget or just don’t make all the tissue checks during the day?

6. Under which conditions is a Pk+4 count applied?
Answer key for Activity #13:
Notice in the following traits were considered “as if dry”: ¼”+opaque and ½”+opaque.

Essay Question Answers
1. If you wish to avoid pregnancy, intercourse is permitted: evenings only. You must observe all day to be certain that no change has occurred. Any change would indicate fertility and the need for abstinence if avoiding pregnancy.

2. If you observe any post-intercourse discharge according to its traits. Don’t assume that it’s “just seminal fluid.”

3. Under what conditions would it be possible to use consecutive days for intercourse when following the BMR while wishing to avoid pregnancy? With a Basic Infertile Pattern, intercourse is available alternate evenings only - even when checking the cervix. Intercourse on consecutive evenings is not recommended in order that there is an opportunity to observe a change in the pattern.

4. When are you supposed to check by tissue? Before and after urination or a bowel movement, day and night, and just before going to sleep, after bearing down.

5. What if you forget or just don’t make all the tissue checks during the day? If you go by the tissue exam alone, you must consider it as if EW-M and count Peak + 4 afterward to establish infertility. This is a precaution in case you missed mucus that was present. However, if you are checking the cervix and find it still firm, low, closed, and dry, then you could go by that and not worry about having missed a tissue check. However, routine tissue checks every time you go to the bathroom are best.

6. Under which conditions is a Peak + 4 count applied? As mentioned above, Peak + 4 should be applied if an observation is missed. It should also be applied if you miss a day’s charting. Peak + 4 is always applied to the last day of the most fertile sign by tissue and sensation, taking into account your personal Basic Infertile Pattern.