The Women's Natural Health Clinic
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Basal Body Temperature (BBT) Charting Instructions

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Cycle

The first day of menstruation is Day 1 of the cycle. Start a new chart on that day. If menstruation starts during the day, transfer that morning's temperature to the new chart.

Temperature

Digital thermometer

1. Use a digital thermometer, ideally one that reads to 2 decimal places.
2. Take your temperature every morning immediately on waking, before getting out of bed or doing anything else. If you have to get up in the night, you should have had at least 1 hour of sleep or rest before taking your temperature. Note the time on the "Time" line at the top of the chart.
3. Use the same route every day of the cycle: (a) place the thermometer under the tongue, in contact with the floor of the mouth, close your lips and leave for five minutes; (b) insert the thermometer into the vagina for three minutes; or (c) smear a little lubricating jelly on the tip and insert into the rectum for three minutes. If you use a digital thermometer, leave it in place for 3 minutes even if it beeps earlier, as the temperature may continue to rise. Any change of route should be made at the start of a cycle. Note the route under "Temp taken" on the right of the chart.
4. Remove the thermometer, read it and mark the result with a dot for each cycle day, either on the line or in the middle of the box. If your digital thermometer reads to 2 decimal places, round as shown in the table below.
5. Clean the thermometer with a little cotton wool and cold water.

Reading	Where to mark it
36.50, 36.51, 36.52	Dot on the 36.5 line
36.53 to 36.57	Dot in the middle of the box between 36.5 and 36.6 (indicates 36.55)
36.58, 36.59	Dot on the 36.6 line

Cycle number

This shows how many cycles you have charted: start with cycle no. 1 for your first charted cycle, 2 for the second and so on.

Cervical secretions

Observe your secretions throughout the day and mark the chart each evening. Observe them either at the vaginal opening or on toilet paper, or by inserting one finger into the vagina and taking mucus directly from the cervix, but use the same method for the whole cycle. Secretions are assessed by how they feel, look and behave when touched.

Record the secretions by shading the appropriate box for "Mucus" (3 lines):

- **Line 1:** each day of wet, slippery, transparent, stretchy secretions

- **Line 2:** each day of moist, white or cloudy, sticky secretions
- **Line 3:** each day when no secretions are seen or felt (dry)

Mark the peak day by extending the shaded area in that column upwards, so it lines up with the temperature readings.

Mark each day of menstrual bleeding, including spotting, under "Menstruation": S = spotting, L = light flow, M = medium flow, H = heavy flow.

Note: the peak day is the last day of highly fertile secretions and is marked on line 1. It can only be recognised in retrospect (the day after the peak), when the secretions have changed back to less fertile characteristics (line 2 or 3).

Cervix

The infertile cervix is shown in box 5 by:

- a solid black circle, showing it is closed
- the circle placed low in the box, showing it is lower in the vagina
- an "f" under "Firmness", showing it feels firm

The fertile cervix is shown by:

- an open circle, showing the cervix is more open
- the circle placed higher in the box, showing it is higher in the vagina
- an "s" under "Firmness", showing it feels soft

Cyclical symptoms

Note cyclical symptoms, such as mid-cycle pain, breast symptoms or mood changes, on the appropriate day.

Disturbances

Your temperature may be disturbed by:

- using a different thermometer
- errors or changes in the way the temperature is taken
- varying recording times
- a change in environment (travel, holidays, change in climate or diet)
- stress, or physical and emotional upsets
- drinking more alcohol than usual or late nights out
- eating late in the evening
- lack of sleep or broken sleep, late nights or late mornings
- shift work
- illness or feeling unwell
- some medicines

If any of these apply, note them on the "Disturbances" line on the day they may have affected your temperature. For example, if you go out late on cycle day 9, your temperature may be higher on the morning of cycle day 10, so make a note on cycle day 10.

Sexual intercourse

Mark X for unprotected intercourse or (X) for protected intercourse.

Further help, questions or additional charts

Please contact the clinic at the end of each cycle to arrange an appointment, unless more frequent appointments have already been agreed.

Our female healthcare philosophy

At the Women's Natural Health Clinic, we specialise in comprehensive natural reproductive, gynaecological, obstetric and general healthcare for women from adolescence to post-menopause. We integrate oriental and western medical diagnosis to create a naturally oriented treatment plan combining herbal medicine, naturopathic medicine, acupuncture, nutritional therapy, exercise and lifestyle, tailored to each woman.

To book an appointment, visit womensnaturalhealthclinic.com/book or call 020 3811 8778.