

Hints and Tips on using a Basal Body Temperature Thermometer

Your temperature data will be most reliable if you follow these guidelines. Not following these guidelines may make your chart difficult to read and may make detecting ovulation more difficult as well. It is essential that you use a special BBT thermometer and that you take your temperature in the morning right after waking. Please note that these are ideal guidelines. We recognise that the realities of your life may make meeting these ideals difficult or impossible at times. The closer you can get to the ideal, the more accurate and reliable your

ovulation detection, analysis and interpretation will be.

- Take your temperature before rising in the morning as any activity can raise your BBT.
- If you use a mercury thermometer, shake it down the previous night. (Or ask your partner to do it)
- Take your temperature at the same time every morning.
- Take your temperature after at least 3 consecutive hours of sleep.
- Keep your thermometer accessible from your bed so you do not have to get up to get it.

Use the same thermometer throughout your cycle if possible. If it breaks or the battery dies and you use a new one, make a note of it on your charts.

- Keep a spare thermometer in case one breaks (especially if you are using a glass thermometer).

Temperatures can be taken orally or vaginally but must be taken in the same place throughout the cycle since the temperatures of the different parts may vary. Most women prefer to take their temperatures orally and this is usually fine, though some women find that they get a clearer reading by temping vaginally.

- Record your temperature soon after you take it (or ask your partner to) since most thermometers only store a reading until the next use. If you have to do something else or want to stay in bed, you can record it later, but we recommend recording it right away when possible to avoid forgetting.

- If you must use a heating pad or electric blanket, keep it at the same setting throughout your cycle. Make a note of its use.

- Take your temperature before doing anything else including eating, drinking or going to the bathroom. If circumstances arise that prevent you from taking your temperature right away, take it as soon as you are able and make a note of the circumstances.

- If you have special circumstances on a temporary or an ongoing basis and you are unable to follow all of the above guidelines, keep temping anyway following the guidelines as closely as possible. Make a note of your special circumstances in the notes section of your chart and/or in your charting profile and we will do our best to interpret your chart. There is still a good chance that you will be able to chart and see your fertility pattern.

- Enter your temperature *and* always record the time you took it in the space provided on the report sheet.

The time you took your temperature is also important for the analysis.

Factors that can influence your BBT

As with your cervical fluid, there are certain factors that can influence your basal body temperature. These should be noted in the notes section of Fertility Friend. Again, as with the factors that influence cervical fluid, these factors will usually not make charting and chart analysis impossible, especially if they occur only rarely, though it may be more challenging. In most cases, even when these factors apply on an ongoing basis, they will not skew your data so much that reading the chart is impossible. It is important to make a note of the factors, however to help with the interpretation of the chart.

The following factors may influence your BBT:

- fever • illness and infections (even those that do not produce a fever) • cold, sore throat • drugs and medications • alcohol (especially in large quantities, though all alcohol consumption should be recorded) • smoking (if you smoke, you should consider quitting before you are even pregnant) • emotional stress • physical stress • excitement • sleep disturbances (insomnia, night-waking, upsetting dreams, poor sleep) • change in waking time • jet lag • travel • change of climate • use of electric blanket • change of room temperature • discontinuing birth control pills • breastfeeding
- If you are in any doubt, please ask your therapist at Buddha Beauty, and make a note of any changes on your report chart.