



Teacher Training Curriculum Correspondence Course 2003, 2019

Some Trials of the Billings Ovulation Method®

BILLINGS OVULATION METHOD® AND AVOIDING PREGNANCY

The International standards for Evidence-based Medicine require that when quoting success rates in medicine, one should not simply take studies in isolation but include the range of published studies that meet the requirements for medical evidence in relation to study design. There have been three such independent studies of the Billings Ovulation Method® in relation to avoiding pregnancy by

- The World Health Organisation (1978 –1981)
- The Indian Medical Research Council (1996)
- The Jiangsu Health Institute in China (1997)

There is now a standard way of reporting the effectiveness of contraceptive methods called the *Pearl Index*, which gives effectiveness in terms of pregnancies per hundred women years. That is the number of pregnancies that would be expected if one hundred women used the method for one year.

Studies also refer to user effectiveness and method effectiveness. Method effectiveness refers to perfect use, that is where the users follow exactly the instructions given for the use of the method.

Finally, the most accurate way of quoting the success rates of contraceptive measures is in initiates. That is, the first time use including any learning period. The reason for quoting figures for initiates is that the effectiveness rates will improve the longer a group has been using a method because those who are likely to become pregnant may already have become pregnant and be lost to the study if the initial period is not included. The three international studies of the Billings Ovulation Method® produced method effectiveness rates in initiates. That is to say the study recruited women who had not previously used the Billings Ovulation Method® and recorded the pregnancy rates for those who became pregnant either during the teaching phase or later.

The overall result for the three studies is that the Billings Ovulation Method® has a method related pregnancy rate of 0-2.2 pregnancies per hundred women years in initiates.

