

## Here's what others have said about Natural Family Planning!

"It keeps the passion alive!" –Jeff Stoll

"NFP is the real man's way of taking care of family planning because you have to take responsibility for it." –Dale Kistner

"I really like the fact that my wife is not putting artificial chemicals into her body that may harm her. With NFP, I know it is not only effective, but safe." –Jim Kahre

"The Creighton method is a viable program for thinking, intelligent human beings. It really works!" –Pat Notestine

"We used the Billings Ovulation method to achieve pregnancy all three times. Our friends were surprised that we knew the date we had conceived by simply reading my own fertility signs!" –Teresa Kahre

"For the past five years, the Sympto-Thermal Method, as learned through CCL, has worked very effectively for us to both avoid and achieve pregnancy. Since I have irregular cycles, being able to use the various symptoms to check my fertility has been helpful." –Christine and Darren Hacker

"Aside from the religious aspects, we use NFP because it is natural. Artificial contraceptives can be dangerous for the woman, with varying side effects." –Leslie and Mike Gentry

"NFP is a way for couples to decide and both participate in that decision and the responsibility for that decision." –Beth Londino

"I think it brings me as a man more into the decision to have children because I can share with Beth her cycle in as close a way as I can, because I'm charting it with her. It helps our marriage covenant in a very holy way, because now we are working as one person." –Joe Londino

"Using NFP has actually given me a better appreciation for life and God's choice of life." –Angie Kistner

Website: [www.stlouisnfp.org](http://www.stlouisnfp.org)



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# What can Natural Family Planning do for you?

## *Natural Family Planning:*

- **Allows you and your spouse to plan when and how many children to have!**  
NFP is 97-99% effective to avoid pregnancy. NFP is also effective when used to achieve pregnancy.
- **Increases your chances of a close, loving marriage.**  
NFP couples have an estimated 95% marriage success rate.
- **Protects your body—no side effects.**  
Artificial methods can cause allergic reactions, depression, acne, weight gain, nausea, headaches, infertility, increased risk of breast cancer, stroke, heart attack.
- **Follows the teachings of the Church.**  
The church teaches that the love and life aspect of the marriage act cannot be separated.
- **Saves money.**  
Artificial methods of birth control cost up to \$1,800 for five years.

## What is Natural Family Planning?

Natural Family Planning (NFP) is a system of understanding a couple's combined fertility through observation of natural changes in the woman's body. Couples may then use this information to avoid or achieve pregnancy naturally, without using drugs, surgery or devices.

Couples use this method together, creating good communication between them which promotes a stronger, healthier relationship.

### How does it work?

Barring any medical problems, men are always fertile. On the other hand, women alternate between periods of fertility and infertility. By cooperating with this cycle, couples can effectively achieve or avoid pregnancy.

Natural Family Planning is based on the hormones that naturally occur during the woman's menstrual cycle causing changes in her body that she can observe. Couples use this information to avoid or achieve pregnancy.

As ovulation approaches, estrogen is produced causing mucus to flow externally from the cervix which a woman can easily observe at the vaginal opening. The mucus crystallizes into parallel strands allowing sperm to swim through the cervix and fertilize the ovum when ovulation occurs. During this time, she may also observe internal changes in her cervix caused by the estrogen hormone. After ovulation, the progesterone changes the mucus and it no longer flows externally but stays in the cervix so the woman notices the absence of external mucus. Progesterone also causes changes in the cervix, the position of the uterus, and elevates the woman's body temperature. The couple, with proper instruction, can use this information to plan their families.

### Billings Ovulation Method and Creighton Model Fertility Care

**Services:** Women observe the external mucus that is produced when estrogen is high, alerting them to approaching ovulation. After ovulation, when progesterone is high, the cervical crypts produce a thick mucus that is very difficult for sperm to penetrate and is usually not visible externally.

**Sympto-Thermal Method:** Couples are taught to observe mucus and cervix signs, which signal the approach of ovulation, and the basal body temperature sign which typically accompanies ovulation.

## Locations for NFP Classes

### Billings Ovulation Method

The AWARE Center  
St. Anthony's Medical Center 314-525-1622  
Website: [www.boma-usa.org](http://www.boma-usa.org)

### Creighton Model Services

DePaul Health Center	314-344-7115
Fertility Care of Farmington	573-631-1722
Hispanic NFP Ministry	314-991-0327
NFP/St. Peters	636-926-7850
St. John's Mercy Medical Center-Creve Coeur	314-991-0327
St. John's Mercy Hospital-Washington	636-239-8595
St. Joseph's Hospital-Kirkwood	314-966-1609
SSM St. Joseph's Hospital West-Lake St. Louis	636-625-5484
St. Joseph Health Center-St. Charles	636-947-5318
St. Mary's Health Center-Clayton	314-768-8017

Website: [www.creightonmodel.com](http://www.creightonmodel.com)

### Sympto-Thermal Method

#### Couple to Couple League

Classes at various locations in the Archdiocese in St. Louis and Metro East. For a current listing of class times and locations call: 314-481-1908. Home study course is also available.

Website: [www.cclstl.com](http://www.cclstl.com)

### Marquette Model (research)

St. Louis University 314-577-8978  
Website: [www.nursing.slu.edu/ncfe](http://www.nursing.slu.edu/ncfe)

### For more information please contact:

Archdiocesan Department of Natural Family Planning  
314-997-7576  
Website: [www.stlouisnfp.org](http://www.stlouisnfp.org)

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## Four Choices to Plan Your Family

### Billings Ovulation Method

Developed by Drs. John and Evelyn Billings

#### **Included in AWARE Center's Program:**

- Taught to observe presence or absence of external mucus discharge related to hormonal changes in the cycle
- Videotape and comprehensive class explaining the method and philosophy of the AWARE program
- At least three individualized monthly follow-up sessions recommended
- Taught by specially trained certified volunteer women teachers

### Creighton Model Services (CrMS)

A standardization of the Billings Ovulation method developed by

Dr. Thomas Hilgers

#### **Included in CrMS Program:**

- Taught to observe external mucus, and patterns of dryness and bleeding
- Focuses on individual reproductive situations with medical and health emphasis and assists in diagnosis and treatment of reproductive disorders (e.g. PMS, infertility)
- Introductory Session is followed by personalized private follow-up sessions taught every two weeks for the first two months, then at regular intervals throughout the first year
- Taught primarily by registered nurses certified by the American Academy of Fertility Care

### Sympto-Thermal Method

#### **Couple to Couple League (CCL)**

An international, inter-faith, value-oriented organization founded by theologian John Kippley and his wife Sheila, and Dr. Konald Prem.

#### **Included in CCL program:**

- Three fertility signs are taught: temperature, mucus, and cervix changes interpreted in a cross-checking manner
- A series of four group meetings at monthly intervals
- Personal counseling available at each meeting as well as between meetings
- Taught by professionally trained, certified volunteer husband and wife teams

### Marquette Model

#### **Included in research project:**

- Clear Plan Fertility Monitor and instruction in observation of cervical mucus or basal body temperature
- A series of three group classes provided monthly with time for individual discussion
- Taught by a certified family nurse practitioner

Methods	Possible Side Effects	% Effectiveness		Continuation % Rate at One Year	Harmful to Fertility	Responsible for Use
		Theoretical	Actual			
<b>Natural Family Planning</b> Creighton Model Fertility Care Services Billings Ovulation Method Sympto-Thermal Method–Couple to Couple	None None None	99.5 97-99 98-99	96.8 93-98 96-97	89 65 69	No No No	Man and Woman Man and Woman Man and Woman
<b>Barrier Methods*</b> Condom Diaphragm	Allergic reaction or irritation Allergic reaction or irritation Sometimes difficult to remove	97 94	88 82	63 58	No No	Man Woman
<b>Vaginal Spermicides*</b> Creams, Gels, Suppositories	Allergic reaction or irritation	94	79	43	No	Woman
<b>Sterilization Surgeries*</b> Tubal Ligation Vasectomy	Operations may be complicated by bleeding and/or infection Increased rates of: hysterectomy, ectopic pregnancy, painful periods May increase risk of prostate cancer	99.8 99.9	99.6 99.8	100 100	Yes Yes	Woman Man
<b>Intrauterine Device (IUD)*</b>	Heavy, irregular or painful menses; painful intercourse; infection; ectopic pregnancy; perforation of the uterus; infertility. Requires replacement every five years.	98	97	80	Yes	Woman
<b>Birth Control Pills (two hormones)</b> *Contraceptive: suppresses ovulation (the release of an egg). If ovulation occurs, the sperm may be prevented from reaching the egg because of thickened cervical mucus. **Abortifacient: if ovulation occurs (3-5% of cycles) and conception occurs, the “pill” acts by preventing the attachment of early human life to the uterus.	<u>Common:</u> may delay return of normal fertility. Breast tenderness, breast cysts, depression, weight gain, headaches, nausea and vomiting, irregular bleeding <u>Rare:</u> possible increased risk of breast cancers, liver tumors, elevated blood pressure, heart attack, blood clots, stroke	99.6	94	72	May Delay	Woman
<b>Progestational Agents (one hormone)</b> *Contraceptive and **Abortifacient: works like the birth control pill, but ovulation occurs more frequently; 10-50% of cycles for Norplant and 5% for Depo-Provera. Depo-Provera (injection every three months)	Delays return of fertility by an average of nine months after last shot; irregular menses; acne; weight gain; headaches; anxiety; breast pain.	99.7	99.7	70	Delays	Woman

**Terms**

Conception: union of sperm and egg; the beginning of human life

\*Contraceptive: prevents conception

\*\*Abortifacient: agent that ends human life after conception has occurred