

Where can you get CycleBeads®?

Call your local public health or family planning clinic for information. It is recommended that anyone interested in this method be taught by a trained family planning provider. You can also purchase CycleBeads at <http://cyclebeads.com>.

Center for Health Training
614 Grand Avenue, Suite 400
Oakland, CA 94610-3523
510.835.3700 - p
510.625.9307 - f
oakland@jba-cht.com
www.centerforhealthtraining.org

Revised 2009

Standard Days Method® using CycleBeads®

How CycleBeads work:

CycleBeads® are a string of 32 color-coded beads that represent the days of the menstrual cycle. They help the woman keep track of her cycle days, identify whether or not she is fertile on that day, and monitor her cycle length. The brown beads represent the days that you are very unlikely to get pregnant. In order to use CycleBeads, your periods must come about a month apart (26-32 days).



How to use CycleBeads:

Each bead represents a day of the menstrual cycle. The cycle **BEGINS** on the first day of your period. The cycle **ENDS** the day before your next period starts. Your period is when you have menstrual bleeding. Your cycle includes all days from the start of one period to the day before your next period. Each time you get your period, a new cycle begins.

(continued)

The day you get your period, move the ring to the RED bead, and you can also mark that day on a calendar. Move the ring one bead each day, even on the days when you have your period. When the ring is on a WHITE bead, you are more likely to get pregnant. During these days you should abstain from sexual intercourse, use a condom or another barrier method, or engage in sexual activity where there is no risk for pregnancy.

On the days where the ring is on a BROWN bead, you are very unlikely to get pregnant. You can have unprotected sexual intercourse. When you start your next period, move the ring to the RED bead again. Skip over any beads that are left.

It is important that you remember to move the ring every day. If you forget to move the ring, check on your calendar for the date you got your last period. Starting with that day, count the number of days that have passed, including today. Then starting with the red bead, count the same number of beads and place the ring on the bead for today.

Effectiveness:

About 5 in 100 women will get pregnant in one year (95% effectiveness) if they use CycleBeads correctly and consistently every time (perfect use). If you do not use CycleBeads correctly and consistently every time, e.g. if you have unprotected sex on a white bead day (typical use), your chance of pregnancy goes up.

Benefits:

It is a natural alternative for women who don't want to use hormones. CycleBeads are reusable, inexpensive and environmentally-friendly. This method helps to better understand the menstrual cycle. It may also promote communication between partners.

CycleBeads are an acceptable method for people with religious concerns about other birth control methods.

Potential side effects and disadvantages:

There are no side effects with this method. Women with cycles shorter than 26 days, or longer than 32 days, cannot use this method. Users must be able to abstain from sex, use a condom or other barrier method, or engage in other types of sexual activity on the white bead days. You must keep track of your cycle and move the ring each day. If you recently had a baby, are breastfeeding, or you recently used another birth control method, talk to your healthcare provider before using CycleBeads.

Potential risks:

CycleBeads offer no protection against HIV/AIDS or sexually transmitted diseases (STDs).

Call your provider if:

- You get your period before you reach the dark brown bead; this means your cycle is shorter than 26 days.
- Your period does not start by the day after you reach the last brown bead; this means your cycle is longer than 32 days.
- You think you might be pregnant because you have not gotten your period.
- You had unprotected sex on a WHITE bead day. You should go immediately to your nearest provider or pharmacy to get emergency contraception (EC). A prescription is not required for EC if you are 17 or older. For a local EC provider, call the emergency contraception national toll-free hotline (1-888-NOT-2-LATE) or visit the website www.not-2-late.com.