

TIMING OF SEXUAL INTERCOURSE FOR YOUR FERTILE TIME

The key to working out when an egg is released (ovulation) is to know your cycle lengths. Most women will ovulate approximately 14 days before their predicted period.

It is quite normal for women to have a variable cycle length. To work out your cycle length, count from the first day of bleeding in one cycle, to the first day of bleeding in the next cycle. Even if there appears to be no pattern to the bleeding it is worth recording all cycle lengths. This first day of bleeding is called "day 1". For example, if a period starts on the 1st August and the next period starts on the 31st August this is a "31 day cycle". Ovulation may occur around day 17 of this cycle (the 17th August, 14 days before the 31st August).

We would normally assume ovulation is occurring if your cycle lengths are between 25 and 42 days.

If cycle lengths are variable, it is useful to look for your longest and shortest cycles. It is then possible to work out the **earliest** time an egg may be released and the **latest** time.

Sperm can live for up to seven days inside a woman's body. So, if you have had sex in the days **before** ovulation, the sperm will have had time to travel up the fallopian tubes to "wait" for the egg to be released. An egg lives for about 12-24 hours after being released. To optimise your chance of conceiving it is best to start regular intercourse, (every 2-3 days), 6 days before your predicted ovulation to one day past ovulation.

At your fertile time, there may be a change in the mucous coming from the vagina; it becomes clear, similar to egg white. You may also experience some pelvic pain / discomfort around ovulation, known as Mittlesmerz pain.

Couples should not abstain from intercourse until the fertile time, as when ejaculation has not occurred for more than seven days it can actually reduce sperm quality, especially the number of motile sperm.

If your period has not arrived by day 43 of your cycle please carry out a home pregnancy test with an early morning specimen of urine and inform the Fertility Clinic of the result.

If you have any questions regarding the timing of sexual intercourse to optimize your chances of conceiving, please feel free to talk to one of the Fertility Nurse Specialists – 01733-673750.

Your cycle length	Approximate day of ovulation	Fertile Days
25 days	11	5-12
26 days	12	6-13
27 days	13	7-14
28 days	14	8-15
29 days	15	9-16
30 days	16	10-17
31 days	17	11-18
32 days	18	12-19
33 days	19	13-20
34 days	20	14-21
35 days	21	15-22
36 days	22	16-23
37 days	23	17-24
38 days	24	18-25
39 days	25	19-26
40 days	26	20-27
41 days	27	21-28
42 days	28	22-29