



Natural Family Planning

Natural Family Planning (NFP) consists of the natural, healthy, morally acceptable methods of family planning that follow Catholic teaching to help couples space, achieve, or avoid pregnancy. These methods use the daily observation of signs and symptoms that reflect the hormonal changes within a woman's menstrual cycle. Couples can learn how to interpret these to recognize the fertile and infertile phases of the cycle in order to achieve or avoid a pregnancy. This knowledge can be applied to regular or irregular cycles. NFP can be used during a woman's entire fertile years, even during periods of breastfeeding and pre-menopause.

NFP calls for mutual responsibility in family planning by both the husband and the wife and allows married couples to live their sexual relationship within natural law as well as within the moral and religious teaching of the Catholic Church. When couples learn about NFP from an instructor (in person or online), they are taught the scientific principles of the natural methods and many come to appreciate the wonderful gift of their fertility and their sexuality.

Modern NFP methods are not the same as "calendar rhythm," which was based on a numerical estimate of when ovulation would occur. Natural Family Planning methods are scientifically supported natural methods that allow couples to manage their fertility. According to the [USCCB site](#), motivated and instructed couples can achieve up to a 99 percent effectiveness rate in postponing pregnancy.

Natural Family Planning Methods

NFP methods are completely safe and natural and do not involve the use of any medications, drugs or devices. NFP has no harmful side effects. There are three methods of NFP taught in the Archdiocese of Chicago that couples can choose from: The Billings Ovulation Method, the Sympto-Thermal Method, and the Creighton Model System.

The Billings Ovulation Method

The Billings Ovulation Method is a simple but highly effective way to precisely identify the days of fertility and infertility during a menstrual cycle of any length and in any reproductive situation. Through daily observations and charting of the recognizable signs, the couple is able to reliably identify the times when they are fertile and infertile. The Billings Ovulation Method was developed by two medical doctors and has been the subject of the most comprehensive scientific research of any method of regulating births. It has been used throughout the world for more than 50 years as an effective and scientific way to achieve, postpone, or avoid a pregnancy. Please click [here](#) for more information on this method.

The Sympto-Thermal Method

The Sympto-Thermal Method is the oldest effective natural method still used in the United States. It involves observing and charting physical changes. These signs provide a cross-check by which couples can reliably determine the woman's fertile and infertile times. They can then



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use this information to increase or limit the size of their family. Please click [here](#) for more information on this method.

The Creighton Model System

The Creighton Model System relies on the standardized observation and charting of biological markers that help a woman understand her health and fertility. In addition to identifying when the couple is fertile and infertile, the biomarkers also help to identify abnormalities in a woman's health. If there are any specific problems they can be addressed using NaPro Technology, the new health science that works cooperatively with a woman's cycle. Please click [here](#) for more information on this method.



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How to find a teacher –

Billings – <https://www.boma-usa.org/>

- Click “Learn the method,” then “Find a BOMA-USA teacher” on drop down menu. Use the left-hand side menu to identify the state where you live, then a list of teachers in the area will pop up.
- Teachers listed on the site specify if they are teaching in English or Spanish.
- The cost for learning depends on the teacher and their sliding scale.
- The method for teaching also depends on the teacher—they may do face-to-face intro classes, they may do one-on-one sessions face-to-face, or they may teach via Skype or another online platform.
- If you are interested, you must contact the teacher of the method you are interested in learning to find out more about teaching times and cost.

Sympto Thermal – <http://www.naturalfamilyplanningchicago.com/>

- Click on Chicago area or virtual class.
- A map will come up and you can determine how and when you want to learn the method.
- Cost depends on site, delivery method, and teacher.
- You may learn either online or face-to-face, depending on the option you choose.
- You can spend time on the site to figure out which day, time, and learning method will work for your schedule.

Creighton – <https://www.fertilitycare.org/>

- Enter Chicago or your zip code in the box below.
- A map will come up and list names and contact info for teachers. You can contact teachers individually and then set up an intro date time. Fees are also set by teachers.
- Most of these classes are in English.



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FAQs –

How do I know the method that's right?

We definitely encourage couples to spend time on the three websites learning about the methods. Each one has a cost associated with it and the cost depends on the method and the teacher. Many teachers also offer a sliding scale. A few sites also have informational videos that can be helpful in deciding what's right.

Some teachers don't leave near me – what do I do then?

Many teachers in each of the methods teach face-to-face and online. Many are very open to teaching via Facetime or Skype depending on what the couple prefers.

I need a certificate for the priest to submit – who provides that?

The NFP facilitator couples can often provide proof of attendance if a couple needs to submit something in their marriage preparation paperwork.