



Frequently Asked Questions

BIRTH SPACING

What is BIRTH SPACING?

Birth Spacing is the practice of waiting between pregnancies. A woman's body needs to rest following pregnancy. After having a baby, it is a good idea to wait at least 18 months before getting pregnant again to maintain the best health for her body and her children. The 18-month rest period is called "birth spacing." When the time between pregnancies is less than 18 months, her body may not be ready to have a healthy baby.

Why is BIRTH SPACING important?

When a woman does not wait at least 18 months between pregnancies, there is an increased risk of having a poor birth outcome (such as a premature birth or a low birth weight baby). These conditions can threaten the health of the child and the mother. These conditions are associated with infant mortality and other short-term and long-term health complications.

How can healthy BIRTH SPACING be accomplished?

There are a number of methods women and men may choose to avoid an unplanned pregnancy during healthy birth spacing. They may choose to avoid having sex during the fertile days of a woman's cycle (such as a Calendar or Rhythm Method). They may choose a barrier method of birth control to keep the male's sperm from the woman's egg (such as a male condom, female condom, diaphragm or shield). A woman may choose a medication or hormonal method (such as the pill, injectables, patch, implants or ring). Each method varies in degree of effectiveness. All of these methods are reversible and allow the woman to resume trying to get pregnant after the healthy 18-month birth spacing period.

How are contraceptive methods chosen for BIRTH SPACING?

Medical professionals are trained to assist women and men in assessing which contraceptive methods may be medically advisable. A woman's health status (including high blood pressure, cholesterol, diabetes, anemia, or other conditions), body mass index, habits (such as smoking), and other considerations are all important factors in choosing a contraceptive method. These same factors are also important to address when choosing to get pregnant.

For more information:

For more information, contact the Family Planning Program at (302) 744-4552.

Family Planning Program Number: 1-302-744-4552

Revised: 01/2011

Page 1 of 1