

Trying to Conceive (TTC): What Does Timed Intercourse Means?

If you are trying to conceive (TTC) there is one thing you need to do as it is very helpful in achieving a pregnancy.

There are also few things that are not very helpful.

Timed Intercourse : How to do it?

The majority of pregnancies take place when intercourse takes place in the six day and especially two day period ending in the day of ovulation (fertile window). Some advice that ovulation should be timed using cervical mucus, basal body temperature or urinary luteinising hormone (LH) kit. Several factors are against this approach:

1. Timed intercourse is emotionally stressful
2. Sperm survive in the cervix, uterus and fallopian tubes for several days (>3 days, close to 7 days)
3. Studies that evaluated the use of mucus, BBT or LH kits to time intercourse did not report better odds for natural conception.

The best approach to a timed intercourse is not to time it at all provided that sex is frequent enough to maximize the chance for sperm-egg interaction. Intercourse three times a week appears to optimize the chance for natural conception.

It is not true that frequent **intercourse** reduces the pregnancy rate due to reduced sperm count and quality.

Timed Intercourse : How long?

Approximately 85% of women trying to conceive conceive within the first year. [The American Society for Reproductive Medicine](#) recommend seeking consultation if pregnancy does not ensue after one year of intercourse in women younger than 35 years and six months in women 35 years and older.

The limited Value of Cervical mucus, BBT and LH kits

Cervical mucus, BBT and LH kit are not accurate methods to **time ovulation**. Fluid cervical mucus, rise in temperature and positive urine LH can take place without ovulation or several days before ovulation. Studies evaluating these methods did not find an increased chance for pregnancy. Using a calendar or *App* to register symptoms and mucus was not scientifically evaluated.

For a minority of couples that cannot have frequent sex (every 2 to 3 days) the use of LH kits maybe helpful. All the other methods (mucus, temperature) had less than 50% correlation to ovulation.

Fertility Apps



Fertility Apps

Fertility apps are generally not helpful in enhancing fertility because they are not based on scientific information. The premise that cervical mucus character, urine LH kit and BBT charts are better than frequent intercourse is not scientifically correct. Thus apps based on tracking ovulation cannot contribute to your fertility beyond intercourse three times a week. No app so far was scientifically tested and was shown to enhance fertility in women or men.

Conclusion: Do have intercourse three times per week after the end of bleeding days. Do not time intercourse. If you must use urine LH kit. If you do not conceive in 6 months ($\geq 35y$) or a year ($< 35y$) consult with a reproductive endocrinologist. Throw your iPhone or keep it and delete the app (till a truly helpful app is available).