

# Baby Spacing

## What is Baby Spacing?

Baby spacing is planning pregnancies with the best amount of time between births so that the baby and the mother can be as healthy as possible. Most experts recommend two years between pregnancies and agree that waiting three to five years is best.

## Why is Baby Spacing Important?

- When women give birth less than two years apart, the second baby has an increased risk of being born with a low birth-weight, prematurely or dying within its first year.
- A mother needs time between pregnancies to adjust to the lifestyle changes that occur naturally when a baby is born and her body needs time to replenish the vitamins and nutrients that were depleted during the previous pregnancy.
- Babies conceived less than six months after the birth of a previous child are forty percent more likely to be born premature or under-weight.

## Spacing Your Babies Will:

- Increase the likelihood that your next baby will be born healthy
- Give your body time to replace the nutrients used during pregnancy
- Give you time to bond with the baby
- Allow enough time for you to give each baby the attention he/she needs
- Reduce your stress level and prevent exhaustion
- Prevent you from feeling overwhelmed and losing your temper with your children
- Give you a chance to work on your personal goals and needs
- Help you financially now, and in the future
- Give you time to lose the weight that you gained during your pregnancy so that your next pregnancy can be even healthier than your last

# Family Planning and Baby Spacing

## Questions to Ask Yourself

- Is Family Planning a part of your life?
- What methods of birth control have you used in the past?
- How many children do you want to have?
- What do you think is an ideal number of months or years to have between your children?
- Do you and your partner have the same ideas about this topic? defects

## Questions for a First Time Mom

- How long do you want to wait before you have another baby?
- How many years apart are you from your siblings?
- How did that impact your life growing up?
- In what ways was the spacing between you and your siblings good? In what ways was it bad?

## **Mom with More Than One Child**

- How far apart are your children in age?
- How many more children would you like to have?
- How long do you want to wait before you have another baby?

## **Family Planning Methods**

### **Every Woman Has the Right to Manage Her Fertility**

Choosing a Birth Control Method is a very personal decision, based on many factors like individual preferences, medical history and lifestyle. The average woman has to be concerned with contraception for at least 30 years, so it is important for women to understand all of their options in order to choose when they become pregnant.

### **Which Contraceptive is Best?**

Your choice of contraceptive depends on several major factors like effectiveness, safety and cost.

### **Questions to Ask Yourself or Your Healthcare Provider**

- Is it important that I do not get pregnant right now?
- Do I plan to have children in the future?
- How often do I have sex?
- Do I have more than one sexual partner?
- Do I want a method that is always in my body or a method to use only when I have sex?
- Do I need a method that helps protect me from HIV and other STDs?
- Does this method fit with my religious or moral beliefs?
- Will my partner or I feel embarrassed or uncomfortable using this method?
- How much does this method cost? Can I afford it?
- Does this method require interrupting sexual intercourse?
- Is this method safe?
- Do I have any health concerns that would make this method risky for me?
- What are the side effects of the method?
- Will I use it the right way every time even if it is a hassle?
- What should I use while I am breastfeeding?

Note: Natural Family Planning is a birth control method based on predicting the release of an egg, understanding the days in the month that the woman is most likely to get pregnant and not having sex on those specific days. It is a very difficult method that requires careful calculation and discipline and even then, many women still get pregnant. For that reason, it is not a recommended contraceptive method.