



## Effective breastfeeding without artificial hormones (minipill) thanks to *sympto*

**During breastfeeding, the *frequency* and *intensity* of suckling will inhibit ovulation and therefore maintain the infertile state of the mother.**

The principal information in this leaflet is about these two points. It is up to you to be available for the baby, to be reassured by a lactation counsellor and to be happy about this wonderful experience.

During your breastfeeding the contraceptive effectiveness is vital. After giving birth, it is important to take care of yourself in order to recover all of your capacities before envisaging another pregnancy.

The breastfeeding principles are very simple but strict. By following them, you can avoid hormonal contraception and also avoid to transmit these hormones to your baby through your milk!

### How to start breastfeeding with *sympto*

After childbirth, you can use the *Breastfeeding* mode. But before switching this mode on, you introduce the 3 red drops by scrolling back on the calendar to the day of birth of your baby. At this very day *sympto* starts a new cycle. The day of childbirth is indeed the beginning of the breastfeeding cycle! Biologically, this cycle will extend your (rose) preovulatory phase. During breastfeeding, your ovulation is postponed by the high prolactin hormone level which is produced during pregnancy and maintained by the baby's sucklings. This very special cycle can easily be much longer than the yellow (progesterone hormone) phase of the pregnancy cycle (which lasts the nine months, determined by the growth of the embryo).

The day after the delivery or later, you switch on the *Breastfeeding* mode: "Complete" breastfeeding means that you respect the LLL rules (La Leche Ligue) by breastfeeding



on demand of the baby; "incomplete" breastfeeding means your child receives food supplements. Please contact a breastfeeding specialist you can find on our site [www.sympto therm.ch](http://www.sympto therm.ch) to be happy and relaxed about this wonderful experience.

After entering the 3 drops and switching the breastfeeding mode on, you introduce the lochia (the bleeding days after the delivery) in order to complete the picture. Every breastfeeding cycle will one day ovulate and tip over into the ordinary postovulatory phase. There is a crucial question: Will the come back of your ovulation occur before the first – true - menstruation or after the first important bleedings (untrue menstruation or intermediary bleeding)?

If you want to find out the precise nature of your bleedings, you should have to chart your temperature all along the incomplete breastfeeding period, eventually over months and months! You could then certify, if you ovulate before the first big bleeding, that this very bleeding would be in fact a true bleeding. If it is not a true menstruation, it means that the end of your breastfeeding cycle is most probably imminent.

Does this uncertainty justify permanent temperature takings? Fortunately not! For your contraceptive effectiveness, as we will see, temperature taking is not necessary at all. Last but not least, your comfort is important, too! On *sympto* the breastfeeding mode works without any temperature input. So relax!

### The principle of *sympto*

You can choose between  *Complete Breastfeeding* and  *Incomplete Breastfeeding* right from the start of your breastfeeding. This is so because during your first 84 days of breastfeeding you may choose at any time to go from complete breastfeeding to incomplete. But as soon as you have passed the 84 days, *sympto* will automatically activate the incomplete breastfeeding mode **even if you continue breastfeeding exclusively on demand of the baby**. It is for safety reason.

#### *Complete breastfeeding*

This phase extends over a maximum of 84 days, thus 12 weeks (= 3 months), as long as you respect the following basic rules:

- 1) The baby's nourishment comes totally and exclusively from sufficient suckling by the baby at the breast.
- 2) Nourishment is distributed evenly throughout the 24-hour day, with at least 5 to 6 feedings, no food supplements or water are added. No lollypop.
- 3) If you were to add up the total nursing time, there should be a minimum of about one and half hours of total nursing each day.
- 4) The baby's longest interval between two feedings must be no more than 6 – 7 hours, night and day.

Thus, there will be one feeding during night on the baby's demand or if you offer him your breast.

To put it differently, if the baby lets you sleep the whole night, which is certainly a good thing for you, you must, for contraceptive effectiveness reasons, switch *sympto* on **Incomplete breastfeeding even if you feed your baby exclusively with your milk (on demand of the baby)**. The exclusive breastfeeding, which does not stick to the 4 rules, is not a "complete" breastfeeding and therefore does not provide you with a total contraceptive effectiveness even before the 84 days.

First of all, do continue complete or at least exclusive breastfeeding as long as you can; it is good for your wellness and for the health of your baby. After 84 days of *Complete Breastfeeding* anyway, *sympto* puts you automatically into the *Incomplete Breastfeeding* even if you stick to the 4 "complete" breastfeeding rules. Why?

According to the Lactation Amenorrhea Method (LAM), as long as amenorrhea continues (phase without bleeding) and the baby can have milk of his mother on demand, infertility and thus avoiding pregnancy is guaranteed for another 3 months (total: 6 months). Compared to this LAM standard, the *sympto* principles are far stricter. After 3 months, you must be ready to observe your fertility signs (even if they might be absent for a longtime), elixir occurrence and also occasional bleedings - but not temperatures.

What does this restriction change for you?

Nothing, except that you must increase your vigilance and that you should enter all the relevant fertility signs explained hereafter.

## Bottom and top 6 rule charting complete breastfeeding

During the complete breastfeeding of the first 3 months, we encourage you to enter all the fertility observations into *sympto* in order to complete your gynaecological picture: vaginal discharge or bleedings. They will however not stop your (rose) infertility since the *sympto* engine does not respond to these sign input in the *Complete* mode and continues to display rose infertile.

So why using *sympto* during this time interval?

Apart tracking your personal profile, you will use *sympto* as your note block for vital information concerning your breastfeeding habits. During the whole complete breastfeeding and even beyond, if you continue exclusive breastfeeding, you should note **frequency** and the **intensity of suckling** by indicating the longest interval. This means, you just fix the two key numbers that you introduce into the *Remarks*: 1) Suckling frequency, f.i. 6 S, meaning six sucklings. **6 S** is the minimum, this number can be bigger. 2) The longest interval per 24 hours, f.i. 6 H, meaning a maximum of 6 hours, not more. This H number can be smaller. Example: 7 S/ 5H is fine, 5 S/ 7 H should remain an exceptional day during complete breastfeeding, By leaving a reminder of these bottom and the top 6 you will not have to

measure all the sucklings separately! You can do this for fun one our two days. With these to numbers, you will have a clear view of your contraceptive effectiveness. This is also an important document for your MD or your lactation/symptothermal counsellor.

**Exceptionally** you might have a continuous bleeding after the first 8 weeks (there would still be another 28 days of "complete" breastfeeding left). In this particular case, prudence tells you to switch *sympto* into *Incomplete Breastfeeding mode* and to start observational vigilance.

## Incomplete breastfeeding 🌸

After 84 days of *Full Breastfeeding* anyway, *sympto* puts you into the *Incomplete breastfeeding*. In this mode, as soon as you introduce a relevant fertility sign 🟩 (lotiony, sticky, streaked) , 🟦 (transparent, very stretchy, slippery) or 💧 (feeling moist), *sympto* will launch a blue fertile phase from that day onwards even if you continue with an exclusive breastfeeding and the tracking of the bottom and top 6 numbers.

There is a new fertility type during incomplete breastfeeding: 🌸 or 🌹, the occasional weak bleedings. They might also open your fertility window. Why? They are considered as a fertile as they could be intermenstrual (untrue menstruation) and possibly hide an ovulation! The sign 🌸 stands for the supposedly strong bleeding of the true menstruation. You might also use it: it also launches a new fertile phase, never a new cycle.

## What about continuous discharge?

The sign 🟡 (yellowish mucus) should never be used during breastfeeding since it refers to a postovulatory stage. For safety reasons however, this sign will put you into a fertile phase and you will have to discuss this case with a specialist!

**Important:** During breastfeeding, about 7 % of all mothers feel continuous moistness 💧 or observe permanent vaginal discharge over several weeks, even with some yellowish colour, so that they might be tempted to put the yellow cloud. These occurrences are not signs of fertility but is a typical pattern in this situation which does not reveal fertility. They must be clearly distinguished from life elixir and have to be noted separately in the *Remarks* since there are no icons for them.

To make sure about this, do the water glass test. Life elixir remains compact and tends to flow to the ground of the glass, the vaginal discharge will dissipate in the water more or less equally.

When you do not want to respect the bottom and top 6 rule any more before day 84 or if you do not breastfeed completely after the birth at all. feeding the baby with milk out of the bottle, switch on your *Incomplete Breastfeeding mode* right off and *sympto* will respond to all of your fertility signs.

## Peak day rule during breastfeeding

The icons are fully explained in the user manual and on *sympto* observation desk when you pass over the icon

Once you have entered one of the fertility signs above, *sympto* opens your fertility window. When will you be infertile again? You will apply a modified Peak day rule: After Peak day, **from the 4th day evening onwards** as long as there is no elixir symptom or some bleeding, your infertility is established again. You will however only use the combination 3) and 4), because 1) and 2) contain postovulatory mucus. These two possibilities might eventually be appropriated before the coming back of the heavy bleeding 🩸, which would be a true menstruation.

- 1) from 🟩 to 🟡 yellowish mucus, rare
- 2) from 🟩 to 🟡
- 3) from 🟩 to — felt nothing, seen nothing
- 4) from 🟩 to —

During the long pre-ovulatory phase of breastfeeding, there might be some days of bleeding. Since they are considered as a fertility sign, there is a new type of Peak day:

5) You observe some erratic bleedings and you choose among the icons 🩸 or 🩸 or 🩸 according to its quantity. Most probably it will be one or two drops. As soon as this bleeding is over, you have to confirm its absence by a —, otherwise the blue fertile phase you triggered will continue to be displayed. By this bar, a Peak day is generated and you will pass again back into the rose pre-ovulatory phase 4 days later, in the evening, granted that there is no new elixir discharge introduced.

**Conclusion:** During the time of *Incomplete Breastfeeding*, the Peak days, except perhaps the very last one, will not indicate the passing by of an ovulation; they only show the trials of the ovaries to generate an ovulation. The elixir is produced in the cervical crypts as soon as some follicle start growing. But during breastfeeding, the follicle will not release the ovum and the follicle will be resorbed before it is completely ripe. This explains why there are different potentially fertile days along the partial breastfeeding displaying each time again the blue phase which must be closed by a Peak day.

## How to handle 🟡 ?

Notice that you will trigger a new fertile phase by the sign 🟡 (to feel moist, without seeing elixir). But confirming some days later the absence of moistness by the icon — (seen nothing), will not generate a Peak day at all! In such a case, if the — is confirmed over the 3 following days, you have to adjust your charting by taking simply this 🟡 icon off which is on lower line but the — remains which is on the upper line. Then you leave a comment in the *Remarks* on that very day. By doing this, you will re-establish the rose infertile

phase backwards and you will not risk any pregnancy either! The repetitions of 🟡 over more than three days, if it is not followed by a 🟩 or 🟡, will not be a sign of fertility but, like continuous discharge, reveal a typical unchanging post-partum pattern.

## Peak days which are difficult to identify

Whenever Peak day is difficult to spot, the cervix self exam can be a very useful technique to look for the elixir occurrence close to the cervix. This will help you identify one of the 4 possibilities.

The cervix exam in itself, whenever you cannot extract any elixir at all, will also generate a Peak day under the following conditions: icon 🟡 (cervix high) followed the next day by the — or, icon 🟡 (to feel lubricate) followed the next day by a —. On *sympto* you can add this cervix exam mode separately.

## Return of strong menstruation

Was it preceded by an ovulation, a true menstruation? Or is it just an intermediary bleeding? For your contraceptive security, fortunately, these questions are irrelevant. But still, ask this question because a true menstruation 🩸 means your cycle is back! As soon as you have an consistent bleeding over some days, looking like your menstruation pattern, preceded by several days of elixir, you have to resume temperature takings. But do remain in the *Incomplete Breastfeeding* mode. At the same time, you keep an eye on your elixir occurrence. Then, probably after some 12 – 20 days, if your ovulation is back and as soon as *sympto* has registered the typical temperature rise, *sympto* will display the following warning message:

**By introducing your temperatures, a cover line and the first higher the temperature have been detected. Therefore, you must stop the Breastfeeding mode RIGHT NOW. This will bring you back into the Symptothermal Pilot Mode (with error messages) which will operate the cross check.**

Just follow this instruction, switch off the breastfeeding mode and continue (or start) the symptothermal observations. Sooner or later, you will pass into the postovulatory yellow infertile phase once your Peak day and the 3 higher temperatures 🌟🌟🌟 have been validated. This transition period is certainly on of the most exciting moments in your breastfeeding cycle!

## Enjoy your breastfeeding

